

ENGAGING WITH ADVERTISING MEDIA IN A CONSTRUCTIVIST
CLASSROOM: CASE STUDY OF A RURAL SEVENTH GRADE CLASS

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DEDICATION

For my husband, Gary,
for his unwavering support in this, our journey,
and for God,
who has this amazing plan for me

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

"Hi, Seventh Graders! Mrs. B [our principal] has been going through grades because mid-quarter grades are coming out pretty soon. The amazing thing is that none of the seventh graders have any Ds or Fs. You guys are the only class from fourth grade up that has no Ds or Fs. So, we are very proud of you, and for that, you guys win one of the mini-Oscars."

On a spring morning, the school counselor appears at the classroom door and interrupts the lesson. There is a smatter of student applause as the counselor hands a small trophy to their teacher. The counselor continues, "And since you guys are all thinking 'outside of the bun,' each of you gets a Taco Bell pencil!" Students unenthusiastically cheer as the counselor hands each an unsharpened, white pencil with "THINK OUTSIDE THE BUN" and "TACO BELL" printed on it along with the ringing-bell logo for the local restaurant. The counselor concludes with, "Good job guys! Keep up the good work. All of your hard work is not going unnoticed." After receiving their gift, two students joke they will try to trade the pencil in for a taco. The counselor leaves the room, and class resumes.

This spontaneous incident occurred during one of the weeks I observed young adults engaging with media literacy. During a propaganda unit focused on advertising media, the teacher asked students to identify propaganda techniques used in ads and to consider the prevalence and the influence of advertising media in their lives. That the counselor's visit took place in school during a unit studying the prevalence of advertising media is ironic. This public school counselor actually provided an advertising service to Taco Bell, a private company, during the school day when students are legally required to attend, and at the minimal cost to the chain restaurant of a few pencils. What better place

to tap the young adult market than offering seemingly innocuous, "free" items within the closed environment of a school?

How this Study Began

During the Fall 2009 semester, I taught an undergraduate methods of teaching secondary English language arts course which focused on media literacy. Media literacy means the ability to think critically about media. Following that semester, at a state writing conference, I co-presented a session on media literacy instructional strategies which included several strategies I used in the methods course. Whitney, a teacher for twenty years in various grades ranging from pre-kindergarten through junior high, shared that she uses commercials to teach the skills needed to identify the examples of propaganda and media techniques used to convey messages suggested in the state education department's grade level expectations (see Figure 1). Whitney told me she teaches the unit in the spring, the month following state tests when students often feel their work is finished for the year. She said she thought commercials watched and created together are a motivating activity for her students at a time when motivation has left the school building. She told me that she planned to add into the unit the strategies of deconstructing (Rank, 1976) which I shared during the workshop.

Deconstruction of advertisements involves looking at individual parts and/or techniques used to construct or create a commercial or print ad. For example, the ad's creator might use text or images which imply comfort or fear depending on the emotional effect he wishes to elicit from the reader of the ad. In deconstructing that ad, the reader must recognize his emotional reaction, determine which part of the ad's construction

brought that emotion, and ask himself what the intent of the ad's creator was in distracting the reader with the emotional response.

Whitney said she also has her students construct advertisements. She said in addition to including the Rank schema into the unit, she wanted to add the idea of commercial construction in the form of parodies to her propaganda/media literacy unit. While she has students create commercials, she felt a requirement to parody a commercial would give her students practice in recognizing and exploiting the persuasive production techniques used in ads.

Information Literacy GLEs/CLEs			
	7 th grade	8 th grade	9 th grade
2	Develop and apply effective skills and strategies to analyze and evaluate oral and visual media		
A. Media Messages	Identify and explain media techniques used to convey messages in various media (e.g., videos, pictures, web-sites, artwork, plays and/or news programs)	Analyze and synthesize two or more messages conveyed in various media (e.g., videos, pictures, web-sites, artwork, plays and/or news programs)	Analyze, describe and evaluate the elements of messages projected in various media (e.g., videos, pictures, web-sites, artwork, plays and/or news programs)

Reading GLEs/CLEs			
	7 th grade	8 th grade	English I
2	Develop and apply skills and strategies to comprehend, analyze and evaluate fiction, poetry and drama from a variety of cultures and times		
3	Develop and apply skills and strategies to comprehend, analyze and evaluate nonfiction (such as biographies, newspapers, technical manuals) from a variety of cultures and times		
B. Literary Techniques	Identify and explain examples of sensory details, figurative language, and basic literary techniques in text, emphasizing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •hyperbole •imagery •propaganda •analyze literary techniques previously introduced 	Identify and explain examples of sensory details, figurative language, and basic literary techniques in text, emphasizing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) jargon b) dialect c) slang d) symbolism e) analyze literary techniques previously introduced 	Identify and explain literary techniques, in text emphasizing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) irony b) imagery c) repeated sound, line or phrase d) analyze sensory details, figurative language, sound devices, and literary techniques previously introduced

Figure 1 Excerpts from the state education departments suggested Communication Arts Grade Level Equivalents / Course Level Equivalents (GLEs/CLEs) for Information Literacy and Reading for Grades 7 through 9. These GLEs were used by the teacher in this study to design a unit on propaganda and media literacy using advertising media. Retrieved from <http://dese.mo.gov>.

Listening to Whitney, I was curious to see how she would introduce and use these strategies in her seventh grade classroom. I wondered what the kids would say about commercials, if and how they thought about the techniques used to create the commercials, and how they would go about creating their own commercials. I thought I would get a better idea of today's students and how they react to and with persuasive techniques in the media by getting into a classroom and experiencing a media literacy unit alongside the students. By listening to their discussions, watching groups work together to create parodies of commercials, and analyzing the writing done during the unit, I thought I would see just how different today's students are from those in Fox's (2000) study in the late 1990s when he studied the effects of Channel One corporate sponsorship on the young adults who viewed the daily broadcasts which included two minutes of commercials.

At the beginning of my study I thought that today's students -- born around the time Fox published his findings, and immersed in an incredible amount of technology from Day 1 of their lives -- would not be as naive as the students on whom Fox reported. With their video games and their own computers to access, surely these young adults in the year 2010 knew the tricks and the technology behind the images they saw on the computer, on their numerous video game systems, and in magazines and on commercials. Kids today, I thought, are much more worldly, much harder to fool, than kids in the 90s. So I thought, as I watched seventh grade students view, talk, write, act, and literally, sing, their way into reading and creating advertising media. I found that young adults were able to identify the propaganda and production techniques of advertising media. This is what the teacher set out to teach these seventh grade students. However, I found only a

few students who demonstrated they were able to critique the effect of ads on their views of society and culture. Even with their immersion in technology from birth, young adults are not immune to the powerful persuasive techniques used by advertisers and are still heavily influenced by commercials and advertisements.

But I also found something else: young adults engaged and enthusiastic about completing schoolwork -- in the spring, no less! I wondered how Whitney kept these students engaged. What was she doing and saying to hold their attention and encourage them to focus during this unit?

Whitney, although identifying herself as a constructivist who knows "my students are learning when they are doing the work" (personal email, May 2011), had worried how her early childhood education training would work at the junior high level:

I've come to realize that I do approach my classroom very differently than many people, but I've always assumed it was because I was early childhood trained before elementary ... It's ingrained in me to look at strengths, find ways to use them to support the areas of challenge, and keep a child feeling success along the way. I've often wondered how well I'm doing that in junior high. (personal email, May 2011)

About her learning-by-doing approach, she was not sure "other people see that [approach working] in a junior high setting" (personal email, May 2011). I wondered how the instructional strategies she used in her social, active learning classroom environment affected how much the seventh graders learned.

My attention to the critical literacy aspect of media in the project took a backseat to my interest in the classroom environment created by an educator who identifies as a constructivist.

Research Questions

After talking with Whitney about her plans to teach techniques of propaganda through a unit focusing on commercials and print advertisements, I wondered, "What does a communication arts class look like when advertising media is the focus?" Though it is appropriate to bring pieces of media into every subject in the school curriculum, for this study I focus on a language arts class. As I observed Whitney's seventh grade class, I found myself increasingly interested in the learning environment she created. Whitney is an early-childhood trained educator who brought her constructivist attitude and strategies to a junior high setting, making her an atypical junior high teacher in her school district. I watched these older students respond enthusiastically to the instructional strategies she used. I decided not only to describe the experiences and responses to media of the students during this unit, but to consider the influences of Whitney's instructional strategies on these student responses. Over the data collection and analysis stages of my research, I focused my research sub-questions:

How do instructional practices influence young adults' responses to media?

How do young adults respond to advertising media?

I wondered how Whitney's constructivist approach to learning looked in a junior high communication arts classroom. I also believe it is important to teach our students how to critically analyze media, especially advertising media. I briefly discuss constructivist theory and the rationale for teaching media literacy in the next section which begins with the voices of two seventh grade students in Whitney's classroom.

Rationale for a Study in Media Literacy in a Constructivist Classroom

This [Oscar Mayer] commercial sings a song so every time you see it [the lunchmeat] in the store you sing the song. It's a catchy tune, and it makes me want to buy Oscar Mayer products (Kelsey, journal entry, 4/2010)

What's the deal with the McDonald's ads? What are they trying to do - persuade the customer [to come] in or scare the living out of little kids. Yeah, a freaky clown watching me eat isn't really my idea of a good lunch. Oh, and the food with mouths - attractive and not scary at all, hmm. I hate Ronald McDonald (Kara, journal entry, 4/2010)

Need for Media Literacy. Teens represent a huge market for advertisers. In 2007, Marketingvox.com estimated consumer spending by teens ages 12 -17 would increase from \$79.7 billion in 2006 to \$91.1 billion in 2011, and that the amount of money which families spend on teens would grow from \$110 billion in 2006 to \$117.6 billion in 2011 (Packaged Facts, 2007). These available billions make teens a valuable market for advertisers to tap, and what better place to market products than in the confines of a school building.

A recent study on commercialism in schools, sponsored by the National Education Policy Center, found that although cash-strapped school districts may seek out corporate sponsorships, the situation is not in the best interest of students (Molnar, et al., 2011).

Corporate involvement with schools necessarily bends what students learn, how they learn, and the nature of the school and classroom environment in a direction that favors the corporate bottom line. These corporations attempt to shape the habits of mind that children internalize and carry with them, to the detriment of us all. (Molnar, et al., 2011)

A corporation seeks to make money from the sale of its goods. On the other hand, schools seek to teach critical thinking skills to students and create independent thinkers.

Independent, critical thinking by consumers, including school-aged children, is not in a corporation's best interest. Corporate sponsorship within a school, though, is not in the best interests of students, as studied by Fox (2000) in the late 1990s.

Prior to this study, my interest in media literacy had increased while reading Roy Fox's *Harvesting Minds: How TV Commercials Control Kids*. He studied young adults in schools which contracted with the corporation, Channel One. In exchange for the technology equipment and services, a contract with Channel One requires that students watch a daily twelve-minute news broadcast which includes two minutes of "corporate sponsorships," which Channel One contends "empower[s]" it to provide its "world-class journalism" services free to schools (channelone.com, 2011). Fox feels the persuasive messages of commercials on Channel One, repeated over time and in different ways, within the "ideologically neutral" institution of school, creates a propaganda environment which exploits young adults (Fox, 2000, p. 156). This environment leads students to behave and respond the way corporate investors seek, mainly, to purchase the products for which they pay Channel One to advertise. Even though the school district in which I observed did not contract with Channel One, Taco Bell and other corporations such as Scholastic, Inc., a publishing company, still found a way to influence purchasing habits of students, through free items and, in the case of Scholastic, inexpensive books and book fair deals for the school library.

In the Fox study, only 6 out of 200 students could provide effective, thoughtful, critical analysis of the commercials (p. 63). The remaining students used ineffective methods of evaluating the commercials. In addition to evaluating commercials, whether effectively or ineffectively, Fox notes how students expressed positive feelings towards

commercials. Because of this embrace of commercials, which Fox states could be described as "blind love, where one sees no faults in another" (p. 81), the young adults "bypassed analysis entirely" and embraced the values portrayed in commercials (p. 79). Among his recommendations, Fox suggests the use of media to teach print and to use print to teach media, i.e., teach the relationship between verbal and visual literacy. To guide her planning during the propaganda/media literacy unit, the teacher in this study's classroom used several strategies Fox lists in *Harvesting Minds* for those who want to help consumers become more media-literate.

Why a Constructivist Classroom. Constructivism is a theory that learning is an active process, where learners construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, and their own reality and meanings, based on reflection, prior experiences, and new information gained through experience (Dewey, 1910/1997; Bruner, 1961; Piaget, 1969; Vygotsky, 1986). For Piaget, the individual alone makes sense of the world. Social constructivists, though, believe knowledge is constructed through critical questioning and dialogue, that it is a social process, not the work of isolated individuals, and that it cannot be divorced from social context (Friere, 1970; Vygotsky, 1986; Gee, 1996). Constructivism differs from traditional didactic teaching where the teacher is the expert whose duty it is to convey knowledge to the learner, much like putting money into a bank account (Friere, 1970).

Responding to a colleague who was critical about constructivist pedagogy and wondering why he should not simply share his knowledge through lecture, Lattuca (2006) writes, "The question is not whether to use one's knowledge and expertise to help students, but how best to deploy our knowledge and expertise so students develop their

own" (p. 358). She describes a constructivist educator as "a 'guide on the side' rather than the 'sage on the stage'" (p. 355). Constructivist teachers include for students such things as collaborative learning strategies to enable interactions among peers that facilitate learning; access to learning resources, tools, frameworks, structures, and information students need to accomplish a task. As the "most knowledgeable and skilled individual in the typical classroom" (p. 356) the teacher must also assess students' depth of knowledge; design effective learning experiences; assist students as they learn and practice new knowledge and skills; and give students specific feedback to improve their abilities and deepen their understandings. Lattuca explains, "Constructivist pedagogy doesn't relieve the teacher of the responsibility to teach; it expands the definition of teaching. Teaching is not about delivering content. It is the act of designing experiences that encourage and enable learning" (p. 358).

I use Lattuca's statements and comments here as I consider the study's classroom.

Whitney identifies herself as being a constructivist:

If I TELL a student something, it's in one ear and out the other. If a student DISCOVERS something, it's theirs forever. If we explore it together, we both learn something and gain from the interaction. I've never felt I was the authority (knowledge-wise) in a classroom, and I think kids see that. I'm not teaching at them, I'm working with them. (Whitney, personal email, May 2011)

Whitney says she's not about marking language errors with red pens, saying she doesn't "see one way that punctuation and grammar must always be. If you want to play with the language for effect, please do. I do it all the time!" (May 2011). She also does not agree that the teacher should choose each book a student reads, saying that while she thinks everyone must read, she does not care what books they read. About scripted

curriculum and district curriculum maps which prescribe day-by-day, page-by-page guidelines for subjects across grade levels, she expressed a constructivist stance:

Where's the fun in knowing when the day starts what all the questions will be and simply waiting until the right student regurgitates them? Everything is so prescribed now, has to be the same day each year ...That's not teaching. Teaching should involve observation and formation of a plan based on what's happening, what's not happening, and what needs to happen. (May 2011)

Whitney is a constructivist teacher who has created a constructivist learning classroom where deconstruction of advertising media will occur. This may appear to be a disconnect to some -- can one deconstruct in a constructive classroom? -- but is not necessarily so, as I describe in this study.

Research Methodology

I attended each day of class during Whitney's four-week propaganda unit for her seventh graders. Whitney's communication arts classroom is in a rural school district. The class consisted of eighteen students, four boys and fourteen girls, all approximately twelve years old. All but one student had parental permission to participate in interviews. I took notes; recorded conversations; and collected student-created posters, their journal entries and other writings, such as scripts and focus group sheets. I also conducted two interviews: one interview of the final project groups of students, which were student-selected groups ranging from two to five members; and a second interview of small groups of students which I selected. The unit lasted four weeks, and class periods varied from one to three hours, depending on which junior high class was involved in state testing and what schedule the junior high teachers agreed upon. Each interview was audio taped, transcribed, and analyzed for significant patterns and themes. Small group conversations were recorded, and while listening to the recordings, I noted pieces of the

conversations I wanted to transcribe and analyze further. I did not have a theory I was trying to prove, although in the back of my mind, I was curious to see how the responses of today's young adults compared to the responses of young adults in Fox's study.

The participants.

My own experience includes teaching eleven years in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in two different rural school districts. During this time, I participated in several summer institutes of the Missouri Writing Project, providing me with numerous opportunities as a Teacher Consultant to participate in the professional development of teachers of grades kindergarten through twelfth. This Writing Project participation also gave me the incentive to complete a master's degree in curriculum and instruction and to begin doctoral work in order to continue work with education undergraduates and practicing teachers. Through these Writing Project experiences and doctoral coursework, I became increasingly interested in reading and writing new media. "New media literacy" involves being able to understand, use, and share messages created through emerging technologies, including podcasting, blogging, and digital storytelling. Needing to select a topic for dissertation research, I was fortunate enough to have a casual conversation with Whitney, a fellow Teacher Consultant, after she attended a workshop I co-facilitated on "reading" advertisements. Whitney mentioned she planned to add to an upcoming propaganda unit the activities presented in the workshop. While talking with Whitney about her plans to use strategies gleaned from the workshop, she invited me to join her seventh grade class during the unit. Whitney has taught for twenty years, the majority of those years in primary grades in her current school district. Bringing her early childhood, student-centered approach to teaching into this junior high classroom, allowed

Whitney's seventh-grade students to respond to advertising media in ways not always available in more structured junior high classroom environments.

Limitations

This is the experience of only one class of students during one unit of study. In addition, the school district is situated in a rural area. Because of this, the findings may not generalize to a larger group or to an urban classroom. The reason I chose this one classroom is due not only to my interest in media literacy, but also because of my professional relationship with a fellow Writing Project Teacher Consultant whom I view as an outstanding teacher. This study, then, with its small sample of rural students and their constructivist teacher, can become part of the data in research regarding media literacy and constructivist approaches to teaching.

There are several limitations to this research. This study may be difficult to replicate in schools due to teachers not having technology and/or access available to them to download commercials from YouTube or a similar site. By working with her school district's technology coordinator, Whitney was able to bypass the firewall which prevents students' access to questionable websites, including YouTube. This may not be the case for teachers in other school districts. The restriction and blocking by public schools of such sites as Facebook and YouTube results in a failure to "build a bridge" between the technology of young adults' outside world to the classrooms we expect them to learn in (Considine, 2009, p. 473). Students will engage more readily in traditional learning when educators acknowledge, respect, and build upon the technology skills, attitudes, and knowledge students bring with them to school (Considine, 2009, p. 479).

Another constraint to replication of the teaching unit and this research comes from Whitney having much freedom to design the unit with texts and topics of her own choosing. Since the annual state assessment was nearing completion when the unit began, Whitney did not have to contend with the demands of standardized testing. The grade level expectations recommended teachers provide lessons relating to certain persuasive techniques, and this unit did so in an engaging manner, but these techniques are not typically assessed on the annual assessment in seventh grade. Whitney had no interference from administration regarding this unit either this year or in previous years.

A constraint to the generalizability of this study is that this is the experience of only one small class of students, in a rural area, so the findings may not generalize to a huge group. However, this study can become part of the data in process writing and media literacy research. "Generalizability" is a term that holds little meaning for most qualitative researchers (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, in Creswell, 2007, p. 76). I believe I establish a rationale for my purposeful sampling strategy for this case, the case of an atypical teacher and her seventh grade students in a rural school district. With such a small number of participants, it is important to include multiple data sources (Hatch, 2002), and I believe I did so by including whole class and small group recordings, videos, writings, photos, and my observation journal. I believe, though, that the mix of students were a typical mix of middle school students.

As I analyzed data, wrote, and discussed the data with colleagues, I formed new questions, which had me wishing for more data, especially relating to my conversations with Whitney when she asked that the recorder be turned off. These conversations held after class was dismissed, where Whitney planned lessons based on the results of the

day's lessons, would have been a treasure of information regarding a teacher's curricular decision-making, a thought I had too late in the unit to repair.

Another limitation I faced was not having ongoing access to the students once school was out for the summer. I did return the following fall semester, though, and listened to the teacher and the group of students discuss commercials and the unit from the previous school year. At one point, one of the students said he was unable to look at commercials the same way and that he had to think about them now (observation journal, October 2011). Familiarity with the participants, brought on by my being in the classroom several times throughout the school year, might also have led to my being too empathetic with them. This may have then have led to my not following-up as carefully as I should in the interviews, preferring to only show my interviewees in a favorable light (Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

Data Analysis

As I analyzed the data, key themes about young adults engaging with advertising media in a constructivist learning environment emerged and will be explained in Chapter 2 Literature Study and in Chapter 4 Findings:

- Influence of student-centered instructional practices
- Thinking and language
- Reading and images
- Creating and composing media.

Conclusion

This study examines how young adults talk, think and write about advertising media. Chapter 2 reviews the relevant research and theory in the areas of constructivist

environments, thinking and language, reading and images, play and multiple rhetorical modes used to create and compose. Chapter 3 details the research methodology for this study, which is rooted in qualitative, case study research. Chapter 4 is a detailed discussion of the results of the study, presenting the voices of young adults in transcript form, accompanied by my own interpretation. Chapter 5 articulates the implications of this study for English Language Arts teachers and for future research.

Chapter 2 - Review of the Literature

This chapter synthesizes the literature that informs this study of the experience of seventh grade students throughout one unit of study where advertising media is the focus.

My sub-questions include:

How do instructional practices influence adolescents' responses to media?

How do adolescents respond to advertising media?

Advertisements possess the power to persuade adults and children to think and act in certain ways. In order to combat this influence and in order to nurture critical thinking, educational institutions since ancient times have been charged with the responsibility to empower students with skills to detect, and to wield, persuasive techniques. Today, the persuasive effects of media are everywhere. Children watch hours of television programming daily which include dozens of commercials and product placements within regular programming. In addition to television, adolescents view advertisements on the internet, on billboards, in magazines, and as noted in the scene above, even in their school building. Providing adolescents with the skills to critique the messages and opportunities to deconstruct the images and texts they view will free them from the texts' power (Scholes, 1985) and aid them in becoming discriminative consumers in our society and citizens in a democracy.

Media literacy pedagogy incorporates critical literacy pedagogy into learning about persuasive and propaganda techniques used in the creation of media. In 1970 the National Council of Teachers of English resolved to explore the teaching and learning of nonprint media and its effects on the lives of adults and youths. Information and

communication technologies are being created daily, and students have access to these computer technologies, as well as 24-hour television on hundreds of channels. News, soap operas, reality shows and every kind of sport are available at all hours. Along with this programming comes commercial advertising and its propaganda techniques.

Classrooms are the "proper place for students to inquire into the ways in which media of all kinds ... shape people's attitudes and perceptions" (Postman, 1985/2005, p. 153).

In media literacy classrooms students are given media to view in order to assist them in making meaning of the world and to assist the students in learning how to "interpret the symbols of their culture" (Postman, 1985/2005, p. 163). Instruction in reading media is necessary since the effects of media are "new environments as imperceptible as water is to a fish" (Marshall McLuhan quoted in Leverette, 2003) and when people are deeply immersed in the media environment, they are unable to notice the effects (Leverette, 2003). These effects must be noticed, recognized, and reinvented in order to change the balance of power. The social process of viewing media and discussing media in groups allows participants to share and receive feedback about their ideas, allowing them to adjust and refine the ideas as needed and making the participants less prone to manipulation by media creators (Fox 2000). Students learning media literacy must also take an active role in creating media. The "response to a text is itself always text" and the expression or creation of the new text expands knowledge (Scholes, 1985 p. 20). Student creation must be part of media literacy education. Students constructing media achieve a deeper understanding when they actually write, film, edit, revise and produce their own media. When people believe they do not possess the expertise or know-how to create

media, they are left feeling "powerless about matters of public discourse" (Fox 2000 p. 165).

Several concepts support this study where students read and created commercials and print advertisements. Since advertising media is the focus of the unit of study, I begin the literature review with a definition of media literacy. I then provide a brief history of media literacy education and describe constructivist pedagogy as one approach to utilize in media literacy education. Next, I provide a conceptual framework of the literature supporting the role of thinking, reading, and composing as it relates to media. It is difficult to separate these intertwined areas. Nevertheless, I attempt to do so as I consider varied theories and similar studies applicable to my data.

Media Literacy Education

In this section I define media literacy as both a body of knowledge and a collection of skills. Because the present research study is conducted in a classroom, I will also provide a brief history of how media literacy education has developed from a pedagogy of protection, to one of empowerment (McBrien, 1999), and back to protection as controversies continue today over the best teaching stance. In addition to the history summary, I describe constructivist pedagogy as one among several pedagogical approaches to media literacy education as a way to show how the approach chosen by the teacher in this study's classroom is situated in relation to other approaches in the United States.

Definition. Literacy is a social practice (Harste, 2003) where to be considered literate, one must be able to use the "dominant symbol systems [-alphabets, numbers, visual icons -] of the culture for personal, aesthetic, cultural, social, *and* political goals"

(Hobbs & Jensen, 2009, p. 4). Literacy is a process, not a product, and involves the thinking, knowing, and doing of a body of knowledge (Fox, 1996/2000). Media literacy has been broadly defined as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and effectively communicate in a variety of forms including print and nonprint texts (Considine & Haley, 1999). It means acquiring the ability to think critically about media messages: "connecting media content to our actual experiences; questioning, analyzing, interpreting, and synthesizing media messages for the ideologies and values they communicate, directly or indirectly; and even constructing our own media messages" (Fox, 2001a, p. 3).

Media literacy includes knowledge and ability to use symbols of different media systems, including print, art, music, film, and drama. This understanding is part of the body of knowledge or the *content* of media literacy. Also important to consider is the *context* of media. Because language occurs in a situation, the situation creates at least part of the message. Context is important because "words in one context or semantic environment can take on an entirely different meaning in another" (Lutz, 1996, p. 80). A semantic environment includes the speaker and audience, the purposes of both the speaker and audience, the language normally expected or used to achieve those purposes, and the actual language used in a particular situation. The language of "doublespeak" occurs in situations when the language of one semantic environment is deliberately used in another semantic environment (p. 83).

The context of media focuses on the production and consumption of media, along with the questions: who is producing the message, for whom are the messages intended, for what purpose, and under what conditions? (Lutz, 1996; Lewis & Jhally, 1998). Media literacy principles which inform pedagogy includes the idea that all media are

constructions; media representations construct reality; media have commercial purposes; audiences negotiate meaning; each medium has its own forms, conventions, and language; media contain values and ideology; and media messages may have social consequences or effects (Considine & Haley, 1999).

The definition for media literacy has changed over the last few decades. It began as referring to a body of knowledge and expanded to include skills. One must have both the knowledge and the skills in order to function as an informed citizen in an ever-changing media culture. In the next section I briefly summarize media literacy education in the United States. This history travels from a stance of protecting children, to one of empowering children, and then back to protection, as controversies continue over the best stance to assume when teaching about the media.

History.

We don't teach children to read in order to protect them from bad books; we teach them to read and write because those are essential skills for navigating our world. The same should also be true for teaching media literacy skills in schools: the goal should be empowerment rather than protection. (Scheibe 2009, p. 68)

Scheibe's comment mirrors the history of media literacy pedagogy in the United States, a history which pits the need to protect from harmful media against the need to empower with information. I will briefly summarize the history of media literacy education. For a more extensive history, my reader may consult the compilation gathered by Hobbs & Jensen (2009).

The roots of media literacy education are in ancient times with philosophers such as Aristotle teaching rhetoric to students. These students practiced oratory and critical thinking skills as a way to learn politics. While some researchers contend that media

literacy education did not develop in the United States until the 1970s, before then, there were educators using as part of lessons in their classroom the media which their students were viewing outside of the classroom. In the early 20th century, John Dewey (1910/1997) was writing about the need to honor the real-life experiences and environment of children which were the basis of the meaning-making process. In 1922, as films were developing, a teacher in Indianapolis reported using motion pictures as a way to teach writing to her eighth graders (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009). Several journals were published to assist educators incorporating film and visual education into the classroom. But the effort failed due, in part, to the necessity of special equipment to view media and, in part, to educators resisting “the slick promotional propaganda used by film companies promoting their wares” (p. 2). The Rockefeller Foundation studied the situation and found that “both educators and business men [sic] developed the notion that entertainment, commercialism and education do not mix” (p. 2, quoting Saettler 2004, p. 106).

The government's extensive use of propaganda during World War I may also have played a part in the public's mistrust of the media. People had not seen such an extensive level of the government's use of propaganda before and this "created a new consciousness about the relationships between modern communications technologies and public manipulation" (Gary, 1999, p. 1). This may have contributed to the public's desire to protect children from negative media influence. Since the 1920s media literacy educators in the United States held the idea that there is a need to protect children against the negative influence of the media. Some teachers taught students how to defend against and resist the “seductions” of media (Postman, 1985). But opponents insisted that the

protectionist stance did not protect children against media effects, and that, instead, it drew a barrier between teachers and students because it did not open for discussion students' positive interactions with media and the pleasure obtained from media. While the protectionist stance would wane for a couple of decades, studies during the 1990s on the effects violence in the media had on children, would recall the need for protection from harmful media.

By the 1950s Vance Packard, Marshall McLuhan, and others were writing about emerging communication mediums and their effects on society. Some educators saw an opportunity to improve students' appreciation of the qualities of film and other media. The "film grammar" approach developed, and students learned the filming terms of fade, dissolve, pan, zoom, and cut, as well as plot and character development, and mood and tone as these pertain to motion pictures. This approach purportedly showed learners how to appreciate the art of film through studying such things as how film directors use camera angles and lighting techniques to create different moods and to send different messages in films. At the same time, others advocated for education to protect children from "overt and disturbing forms of sensationalism and propaganda pouring out of the rapidly growing culture industries" (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009, p. 3).

Beginning in the 1960s some educators brought to their classrooms the idea that students should create films because in doing so, they would come to understand how symbol systems are used in recording and creating culture. It is through understanding and developing our abilities to use the symbol systems of our culture that we become members of it (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009; Gee, 2003). Theorists studied these symbol systems in a growing field of semiotics. Founded in America by C.S. Peirce (1839-

1914), the study of semiotics holds that everything stands for something other than what it is. Semioticians study three elements of this "stands-for" relationship: the object or referent; whatever the object stands for; and the person using the object to stand for something.

During the 1970s and 1980s educators moved away from the protectionist stance to develop inquiry and analysis techniques of what educators considered “new, legitimate forms of expression and community” (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009, p. 3). Interest grew around the Marxist ideology of media reinforcing ideologies of dominant groups. This led to the development of critical thinking and critical literacy pedagogical stances in media literacy education. The basis of the critical thinking stance was understanding, participation, textual analysis, and reflection, and its goal was to help children make wise media choices. Dialogue, between teacher and students with interchanging roles -- the teacher becoming the student and the student becoming the teacher -- along with dialogue between peers, was used as a strategy for teaching and learning, and the goal was democratic citizenship. The critical literacy movement also saw media literacy education as a critical practice of citizenship within a democracy. With roots in Vygotsky’s and Freire’s socio-cultural ideas, and even earlier with the social experiments of philosophers at the Frankfurt School, advocates for the critical literacy movement in media literacy education advocated that students be taught to consider the power relations represented in media. The critical literacy approach also drew on critical thinking, participation, reflection, and dialogue, but with the idea that analysis of the context should reign over textual analysis. Critical literacy is about power relations and is activist-centered, asking learners to engage in forms of analysis to expose “hidden” ideologies and “liberate”

themselves from influences (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009). Lewis and Jhally (1998) thought students should examine media production and audiences, and monetary and political motivations of the media industries, as well as power issues and who benefits and who does not. McLaren (1998) wanted learners to use their knowledge to advocate for social, political, and racial equality. Fiske (1987) thought there was a need for in-depth analysis to uncover how media events work to repress, marginalize, and invalidate others. Along this line of thinking, Masterman argued in the 1980s that media literacy educators needed to "unpack the complex economic relationships that underpin the structure of media and culture industries, because questions about authors and audiences, messages and meanings, and representations and realities are always constrained by economic issues that reproduce and maintain unequal power relationships" (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009, p. 3).

Concerns continue in the 21st Century between competing views of what media literacy education should be. Hobbs and Jensen regard these tensions as part of the "journey to empowerment" (p. 4) and categorize them as:

- Those who see media literacy education as "an 'alternative to censorship,' an opportunity to move government out of the business of media regulation" (p. 4).
- Those who "push their political agendas onto students," who offer their "critique of capitalism as gospel" and who mandate "service learning" by "coercively enrolling students into a political action project, telling them what to think instead of encouraging them to think for themselves" (p. 4).
- Those who believe that the media literacy movement has "stepped away from its critical focus and lost its edge, teaching aesthetic and text-analysis skills but not

'creating an engaged student who has the capacity to undertake social action' (Quin & McMahon 2007, p. 229)" (in Hobbs & Jensen, 2009, p. 4).

- Those who worry that media literacy education "increases alienation and promotes cynicism, robbing students 'of their sense of focus and ambition as it relentlessly drives home the dour political-economic magnitude of the media machine' (Zanker, 2007, p 53)" (in Hobbs & Jensen, 2009, p. 4).
- Those who are troubled that media literacy education can activate, among some students, "an outpouring of transgressive moments as in student-created videos that feature parodic, horrific, grotesque, and forbidden content, sometimes involving animal cruelty, violence, sexuality, gender and racial stereotypes ... (Grace and Tobin 1998, 45)" (in Hobbs & Jensen, 2009, p. 4).

Add to this list the online technologies now available which create new opportunities, priorities, and problems. Today educators struggle with new propaganda from digital media industries insisting that in order to be able to compete in the global world, students must know how to use these newest tools. With the present push for "competency of technical tools" instead of the "film grammar" of the 1950s, it appears that content in media literacy education seeks once more to become the driving force over the context of inquiring into power relationships within media enterprises.

Jeong, et al. (2010) compiled a meta-analysis of media literacy interventions tested in studies since 1993. The purpose of their meta-analysis was to provide an initial review of media literacy interventions, believing this to be important to guide the design of future media literacy interventions. Thirty two media literacy media literacy interventions involving 6,307 participants were reviewed. The tested interventions

involved a range of topics (e.g., body image, violence), agents (e.g., teacher, peer), audiences (e.g., children, adolescents), and outcomes (e.g., media criticism, topic-relevant behavior). Effect sizes were estimated. The authors of this meta-analysis used McGuire's (1964) "inoculation theory" as a theoretical framework to explain the effects of media literacy interventions (Jeong, et al., 2010, p. 5, referencing McGuire, 1964). Similar to receiving a vaccine to protect your health during the winter flu season, the inoculation theory holds that "prior exposure to counter-attitudinal information can protect one against subsequent attacks" (Jeong, et al., p. 6). Studies chosen for the meta-analysis had to meet the following criteria. First, studies must have tested the effects of an intervention on an audience. Second, studies must have used quantitative research methods. Third, studies must have reported necessary statistical information required for a meta-analysis. Finally, all identified studies were written in English.

The Jeong, et al. meta-analysis found that media literacy interventions have positive effects on cognition including positive changes in criticism (understanding of persuasive intent), attitude toward media message), influence (how much influence one thinks media has on audience), realism (perception of reality of portrayal of events), belief (outcome, expectancy, consequences of behavior), attitude (toward a behavior), norm (social pressure), efficacy (perception of control over one's behavior), and behavior (actual behaviors and behavioral intentions). The effects of media literacy intervention did not differ by moderators: agent (teacher, peer, researcher, other), setting (school, community, both or other), audience involvement (passive, interactive, production), or topic (tobacco, body image and eating, media violence, sex, other). They also found that

media literacy interventions are more likely to be successful when they were multiple sessions, but that more than a moderate amount of sessions did not differ in effectiveness.

This meta-analysis was conducted on a small number of studies, and excluded from the meta-analysis were outcomes of production skills, self-esteem, hostility and benevolence, and involvement. The finding that audience involvement had no effect on media literacy learning, contradicts the constructivist theory that all learning is active. The present study examines active audience intervention.

In addition to the Jeong quantitative meta-analysis, Martens (2010) wrote a synthesis of a large subset of the academic literature on media literacy education. He determined that most of the literature defines media literacy in terms of the knowledge and skills individuals need to analyze, evaluate, or produce media message. He divides these knowledge and skills into four categories: media industries, media messages, media audiences, and media effects. Martens indicates the limitations to the academic literature on media literacy includes the difficulty of generalizing from qualitative studies done with small groups study participants. Even with those limitations, Martens makes suggestions for further research based on three analytically different research perspectives. First, if media literacy depends on knowledge and skills, researchers should determine which knowledge and which skills are necessary.

Next, Martens suggests that if media literacy researchers want to explain the effectiveness of media literacy practices, researchers might compare analysis with production; peer-led with teacher-led methods; and factual with evaluative approaches. Researchers might also explore the contributing role of individual differences including varying histories of media exposure and influences of class, race, gender, and age. The

third research perspective Martens responds to are those researchers who want to preserve the real-life relevance of media literacy or how media literacy can transfer to everyday consumption and attitudes.

In the present study classroom, the teacher approached the teaching of media from both protectionist and empowerment stances, taught within pedagogy based on constructivism. The next section includes a discussion of constructivist beliefs and specifically, the whole language approach as one approach utilized in constructivist classrooms.

Constructivism and the whole language philosophy to teach media literacy.

To further situate this study's classroom, I will describe several pedagogical approaches by contrasting textual analysis versus contextual analysis; and traditional and progressive pedagogies. I will then describe in greater detail the theory of constructivism including the whole language philosophy, for the reason that the study teacher told me she is a constructivist educator, and the content and strategies she utilizes in her classroom are similar to those found in classrooms where a pedagogy based on the theory of constructivism and the philosophy of whole language is used (see Goodman, 1986/2006, and Watson, 1996).

Pedagogies promoted in media literacy education include those based on analysis of the text as well as those based on contextual analysis (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009). Text analysis is sometimes seen as the opposite of contextual analysis. Textual analysis pulls text out of context to analyze the techniques of production. In other words, textual analysis "deconstructs" a text. By contrast, contextual analysis keeps the text together to analyze it as a whole, asking questions about who produced the text, its political purpose,

and the expected audience response. Contextual analysis is usually used in critical literacy pedagogy. Lewis and Jhally (1998) suggest the two practices are opposed as one concentrates more on proficiency of reading (text-based) while the other (contextual analysis) concentrates on cultural criticism understood within social relations.

Another set of contrasting pedagogies are traditional versus progressive pedagogies. Traditional pedagogy includes rote learning of a given body of information along with pressure to learn by threat of punishment, i.e. poor grades (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009). Progressive pedagogy is discovery learning which is child-centered, where the child, not the teacher, chooses what to explore and produce. Some teachers attempt to use a version of traditional by inserting a radical body of information as well as analytical techniques to alert students to the operations of the “dominant ideology” while still keeping the learning teacher-centered (Buckingham, 1998, p. 4).

A popular progressive theory known as constructivism is a view that learning is an active process, where learners construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, and their own reality and meanings, based on reflection, prior experiences, and new information gained through experience (Dewey, 1910/1997; Bruner, 1961; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969; Vygotsky, 1986). Constructivists believe knowledge is socially constructed through critical questioning and dialogue, that it is a social process, not the work of isolated individuals, and that it cannot be divorced from social context (Friere, 1970/2005; Vygotsky, 1986; Gee, 1996). Constructivist teachers will use active techniques, real-world examples, and problem-solving activities in the forms of discussion, research, and media production. Teachers utilize dialogue, and encourage students to reflect on and talk about what they did and how their understanding is

changing. Constructivist teachers utilize collaboration and peer criticism, and shifts emphasis toward the analysis and creation of messages, away from the providing of answers, and toward the process of asking questions (Hobbs, 1998).

Whole language is a philosophy within the constructivist umbrella, along with discovery, inquiry-based and problem-based learning. Dorothy Watson (1996) defines whole language as "a perspective on education that is supported by beliefs about learners and learning, teachers and teaching, language, and curriculum" (p. 188). These beliefs include using all systems of language and using both in school and outside of school experiences of children to guide instruction. Watson outlines what she sees as the principles of whole language: language is taught with all systems intact; the whole learner is addressed and given responsibility in his own learning; teachers are activists outside of school for children and curriculum; and the curriculum is based on the needs of the students. With regard to the importance of using all systems of language while teaching and keeping these systems together, she says:

Whole language is a point a view that language is inherently integrative, not disintegrative. It follows that language is learned and should be taught with all its systems intact. That is, all the systems of language - semantics, syntax, and graphophonemics (call it phonics if you must) - are maintained and supported by pragmatics (language in natural use) and must not be torn apart if language is to be learned naturally. (p. 188)

Whole language, according to Watson, involves not only all systems -- or the "whole" -- of language, but the whole learner as well:

Whole language involves whole learners (with all their strengths and needs) who, when given real and continuous opportunities in safe and natural environments, can initiate learning, generate curriculum, direct their own behavior, and evaluate their own efforts. (p. 188)

The work of whole language teachers does not end in the classroom. Outside of the classroom, whole language teachers are "activists and advocates for students, for themselves, and for their curriculum" (p. 189). As for the curriculum, Watson says that since "students are at the heart of curriculum planning," teachers can do little detailed planning of a curriculum beforehand as "nothing is set into classroom motion until it is validated by learners' interests and motivated by their needs" (p.189). Curriculum in a whole language classroom is guided by the students' experiences both inside and outside the classroom, is written based on the students' strengths and needs, and offers invitations to learn through reading, writing, talking, and other communicative activities. The teacher also accepts the invitations to learn as the teacher reads, writes, and participates alongside the students as a community of learners. Student responsibility for learning is emphasized in whole language classrooms, and the teacher does not do things for the students that the students can do themselves. The teacher facilitates an environment "within which learners are led not into the impossible but into the delightfully difficult" (p. 194). In a whole language classroom, meaning takes precedence over mistake-correcting. Learners are not penalized for mistakes and may learn more from their mistakes than from getting something right, especially when the environment allows time to reflect and collaborate and build knowledge with peers. Whole language teachers believe stopping a learner in order to make surface-level corrections stops a learner's momentum and motivation to continue constructing meaning while reading, writing, and speaking. The whole language physical classroom is comfortable and "home" for students (p. 195), including spaces where learners can meet with partners, in small groups, or in private.

Another constructivist, whole language expert, Brian Cambourne, explained that educators who understood and practiced certain learning principles could provide their students with "powerful, critical, active, productive literacy" education (1988, p. 203). Interested in finding an educationally relevant theory of learning in the area of literacy, Cambourne (1995) watched parents teach toddlers how to talk and identified several conditions for learning including: immersion, demonstration, engagement, expectations, responsibility, approximations, employment, and response. Cambourne took the conditions of learning identified in his study of preschoolers' language acquisition and explored what occurred when these out-of-school learning conditions are applied in a regular classroom. Cambourne explains what he feels learners need in terms of a learning environment in his principles of whole language:

- a) **immersion** in appropriate texts.
 - b) appropriate **demonstrations**.
 - c) the **responsibility** for making some decisions about when, how and what they read and write.
 - d) **high expectations** about themselves as potential readers and writers.
 - e) **high expectations** about their abilities to complete the reading and writing tasks they attempt.
 - f) freedom to **approximate** mature and/or 'ideal' forms of reading and writing.
 - g) time to **engage** in the acts of reading and writing.
 - h) opportunities to **employ** developing reading and writing skills and knowledge, in meaningful and purposeful contexts.
 - i) **responses** and feedback from knowledgeable others which both support and inform their attempts at constructing meaning using written language.
 - j) plenty of **opportunities**, with respect to the written form of language, to reflect upon and make explicit what they are learning.
- (Cambourne, 1988, p. 203, emphasis his)

Cambourne found that engagement was the key to learning.

The significant others in young learners' environments communicate very strong expectations that the learning task will ultimately be completed

successfully, while simultaneously providing deep immersion with meaningful demonstrations. But the learners themselves decide the nature of the engagement that will occur. (1995, p. 185)

Upon this finding, Cambourne formulated "Principles of Engagement" (1995, p. 188).

Cambourne's principles of engagement hold that learners are more likely to engage with a learning demonstration if they believe that they are capable of learning whatever is demonstrated, and that whatever is demonstrated has value, purpose and use for them.

Learners are also likely to engage when they are free from anxiety, and when demonstrations are given by someone they like, respect, admire, trust and would like to emulate. When teachers consciously applied the principles, the teachers created a climate conducive to learning literacy. When Cambourne's conditions of learning of expectations, responsibilities, approximations, employment, and response were applied in such an environment, learner engagement dramatically increased. He identified the following learning processes involved in a classroom which utilizes the conditions of learning: transformation which is the process of making something one's own which "co-occurs with the decision to take control of ... the concepts and knowledge involved" (p. 188); discussion/reflection, the purpose of which is to explore, transact, and clarify meaning with others (discussion) or with oneself (reflection); application, which happens during discussion/reflection as learners reflect upon their own and their peers' comments, and which leads to a cycle of transformation-reflection-discussion-reflection-transformation, as students apply their developing knowledge and skills; and evaluation, a response to the question, "How am I doing?" posed by both the learner himself, or by the teacher, or whomever is in the teacher's role, throughout the interaction.

When I considered Watson's principles of whole language and Cambourne's conditions of learning and principles of engagement in connection with Whitney's classroom in this present research, I found several similarities. I elaborate on those similarities in Chapter 4.

Kirschner, Sweller & Clark (2006) questioned the effectiveness of constructivist instructional strategies. Their review of research showed that while "unguided or minimally guided" constructivist instructional approaches are popular, there is little evidence of their effectiveness. In their study they reviewed the "differently named but essentially pedagogically equivalent approaches" of discovery learning, problem-based learning, inquiry learning, experiential learning, and constructivist learning, all of which they group as "constructivist-based" (p. 75). According to Kirschner, et al., the underlying belief of constructivism is that students construct their own knowledge, and when students are placed in an inquiry context, they will discover knowledge due to their experiences with the inquiry. Kirschner and his colleagues do not believe the minimal guidance of constructivist instruction works.

However, Hmelo-Silver, Duncan, and Chinn (2007), in response to Kirschner, et al.'s article, question those conclusions. Hmelo-Silver and her colleagues believe that instead of saying the approach does not work, more important questions should be asked:

[u]nder what circumstances do these guided inquiry approaches work, what are the kinds of outcomes for which they are effective, what kinds of valued practices do they promote, and what kinds of support and scaffolding are needed for different populations and learning goals. (p. 105)

Hmelo-Silver, et al., believe that "innovative approaches to education such as problem-based learning (PBL) and inquiry learning (IL)" (p. 99) are effective due to the

scaffolded guidance they provide. They list studies which show that appropriate scaffolding through questions, models, structures, templates, and prompts provides support to students as they engage collaboratively in constructive processing. The "kinds of valued practices" which are constructivist instructional strategies promote includes "soft skills" (p. 105).

Students learn both "hard skills" and "soft skills" in school. Hard skills include the content, technical, and physical skills that pertain to any given subject. These hard skills are easy to assess on computerized tests (Terego, 2010; Lerman, R.I., & Packer, A., 2010). The soft skills of attitudinal and personality qualities are more difficult to assess. Soft skills include such skills as team collaboration, time management, communication skills, work ethic, Socratic inquiry, problem definition and solution, and creative, original and critical thinking (Terego, 2010). Employers report their employees often lack soft skills (Perreault, 2004; James & James, 2004; Mitchell, G.W., Skinner, L.B., & White, B.J., 2010).

In 2009, the National Reading Conference published a summary of research prepared by Williams and Baumann (2009) regarding teacher effectiveness. Williams and Baumann concentrated this research on elementary literacy teachers, from grades K-6. While the present study is situated in a seventh grade classroom, I think the information gleaned from the research summary is applicable to upper grades, too. Williams and Baumann narrowed their review to studies conducted from 1990 through 2007, which included survey, qualitative, and quantitative methods of collection, and which appeared in peer-reviewed journals and works authored and produced by reputable, scholarly professionals. They ended up with 22 studies which met their

criteria. Their findings are represented in Table 1. When I compare these findings to the present study's teacher, I am able to check off each of the seventeen categories as representative of Whitney.

Table 1 Summary of research conducted by Williams & Baumann on teacher effectiveness. Compiled from studies from 1990-2007, narrowed to 22 studies, where approximately 1,500 teachers were observed, interviewed, and surveyed.

Summary of Research on Effective Elementary Literacy Teachers (Williams & Baumann, 2009)	
<p>Teacher's philosophy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hold high expectations • believe learning is social • strive toward fostering student independence 	<p>Instructional strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • various strategies • multiple materials • explicit instruction • integrated instruction • multiple forms of assessment • small group instruction
<p>Engagement practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motivation and praise • supportive physical classroom environment • student work displayed • ongoing rich talk between students and teacher • variety of management routines 	<p>Personal qualities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compassion and empathy • instructional adaptability • enthusiasm

Marzano, et al., (2001) in *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*, studied the effect of different instructional strategies on student achievement. Based on their findings, they believe no instructional strategy works equally well in all situations (p. 8) and that further research is necessary to determine which instructional strategies work best in which subject areas and at which grade levels. The present study will help provide information on which instructional strategies work best while working with advertising media.

From this discussion of media literacy education and the constructivist, and more particularly, the whole language approach to teaching about media, I next move to processes involved in learning about media. I consider the processes to involve mainly the reading / viewing and the writing / creation of the media, as well as the thinking and the talk which happen in both reading and writing situations.

What is Thinking?

Frank Smith (1990) assures us that everyone is born capable of thinking. Babies, Smith says, are born with efficient brains which they use to learn about their world, culture, social structure, and language, and mostly this is done without formal education. Smith defines thinking as "the business of the brain" (p. 9). The challenge, of course, is that we cannot inspect thought directly (Smith).

Thinking is sometimes referred to as "inner speech" and comes into existence through words written or spoken (Vygotsky, 1986). Inner speech is to a large extent "thinking in pure meanings. It is a dynamic, shifting, unstable thing" (quoting Vygotsky, John-Steiner, 1997, p. 215). John-Steiner, who researched creative thinking, said of inner speech, "It is a language of thought for the self" (p. 215). Moffett (1992) tells us that thought is invisible until it is translated into deeds or words, but that thought and language are not the same. Moffett contends that language cannot equal thought for several reasons. First, he says, thought is too big for words. Second, before learning all resources of language, less-developed learners express thinking in whatever way they can. Next, Moffett explains that language has rhetorical function and logical function, and the speaker needs to know the difference in *abstracting from* raw ideas (which makes information) and *abstracting for* certain effect (which makes communication) (Moffett,

1992, p. 7). Another reason that thought cannot equal language is that the shift in medium necessitates loss, and the medium of language has limits. The final reason Moffett feels that thought and language are different, is because language arts are arts and involve a person playing games with words and making aesthetic choices as they put thought into language (Moffett, 1992).

Constructing meaning, or thinking, is an active process that involves "simultaneous differentiation and integration" (Moffett, 1992, p. 9). An example of this active process is in the ladder of abstraction, explained by Hayakawa (1990), in *Language in Thought and Action*. Hayakawa uses the visual image of a ladder to recognize movement from the low, bottom rung of the ladder to the high, top rung of the ladder. As an example, the bottom rung of the ladder represents Bessie the cow at a molecular level; the next rung is Bessie as the object; the third rung is Bessie, the name that we give the cow. The fourth rung is the word "cow" which becomes a bit more abstract as we lump all cows into one category. The fifth rung represents livestock, as the cow is abstracted to another level, lumped into the category of all four-legged farm creatures. The sixth rung is yet another abstraction, further generalizing Bessie the cow into the category of "farm asset." On the seventh rung she is simply "asset" and finally at the highest rung she represents "wealth." All of the characteristics of the original object and the verbal name we gave her, Bessie, are gone at the highest rung. Bessie as wealth is unrecognizable because her characteristics have been generalized, or abstracted. The idea of the ladder of abstraction is important because the continuous movement up and down the ladder, moving from specific, differentiated details, to general, integrated concepts is a characteristic of clear thinking.

Thinking and language.

If language can be used to control minds, then those who control language can control minds and ultimately control society. Language is power; those who control language control the world. (Lutz, 1989, p. 2)

Anthropologists and linguists, Edward Sapir in 1929 and Benjamin Lee Whorf in 1940, believe every language is biased. This Sapir-Whorf theory for how language affects the way we see the world provides that "Every language ... incorporates certain points of view and certain patterned resistances to widely divergent points of view" (quoted in Lutz, 1996, p.30). Lutz says the Sapir-Whorf theory is not that language determines what we *can think*, but that language influences what we *routinely think* (p. 30).

In situations "(w)hen we abstract, we select the information we will pay attention to while ignoring the rest, focusing on a limited amount of information that we then arrange into recognizable patterns" (Lutz, 1996, p. 58). We select information that can be known or observed. To that selected information, we make a statement about the unknown, an educated guess, sometimes a "leap of logic" (p. 64), also known as an inference. Many times that inference is correct, but not always, as an inference may be carefully or carelessly made, and become a barrier to clear thinking (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990). Lutz referred to, and I have witnessed several times, news reports that contain visual images which don't necessarily relate to the story being told, but tell a different story, misleading listeners. Such was the case recently as a local news station reporting on an agricultural Ponzi scheme of a local woman showed the image of the local grain elevator. This enterprise had nothing to do with the woman, had absolutely no dealings with her, yet because the news station made no distinction or clarification, an

uninformed viewer might think the grain elevator was as guilty of stealing money as the woman.

Returning to Hayakawa's ladder of abstraction, the combination of high-level and low-level abstractions is useful when communicating, but the overuse of either level may not send the intended meaning and may end up frustrating the audience. Dead-leveling abstraction (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990; Johnson, 1989) at the lower level, by providing numerous details but no general conclusion, leaves a listener or reader with no directions of what to do with the information given. A speaker stuck at high-level dead-leveling frustrates the listener or reader who is left with no clue as to the main point of the conversation or writing.

Dead-leveling abstraction leads to the creation of false maps of territories. In the study of general semantics, a "map" refers to a description of some thing, e.g., a place, person, or idea, which is called the "territory." As with paper maps which guide our driving in geographical places with which we are not familiar, if the map shows a road or town or river where none exists, the map is useless, i.e., a false map, a map which is not the territory it presumes to describe. Dead-level abstracting creates false maps by providing lots of details or not enough details. A road map filled with many details, e.g., the dog, the grave, the apple tree, the shed with the faded advertising painted on its roof, we may be unable to find the road we need to follow due to the clutter of the details. In high-level abstracting, the road may not even exist on the map due to a clouded satellite view. The general semantics principle regarding the map-territory relationship reminds us: the map is not the territory; no map can represent all aspects of the territory; and every map reflects the mapmaker's point of view (Lutz, 1996; Hayakawa & Hayakawa,

1990). Maps are useless if they do not portray the territory correctly. These useless, false maps can happen in several ways. When an individual misreads an accurate map, they make a false map. Individuals also make false maps when the individual does not have enough information or when they misread the territory. Another way false maps are made is when government, advertisers, businesses, and others offer false maps in order to make an individual follow these false maps and not the individual's own.

Advertisements are incomplete maps, whose creators select precise images and texts for the short amount of time allowed. Advertisements may cause students to misread them. Fox (2000) is concerned that since human "perception naturally gravitates toward wholeness and not fragments, we accept most pictures as complete truths" (p. 168). In its area of psychology, this tendency of perceiving wholes from fragments is called a "gestalt." Gestalts are prevalent in adolescents (Arnheim, 1969). I discuss gestalt psychology in greater detail in the section "Reading images" in this review. Media literacy education can aid students in creating more accurate maps of territories, or at least in realizing the map is not the territory. In other words, commercials can serve as maps for students to examine critically and test against the territory/situation they represent, which critical analysis can then lead students to realize the commercial does not necessarily contain the entire truth, only parts which do not equal the whole. In the next section, I review what happens when we take the power of language and use it in conversation with others.

Thinking and talk.

(W)e believe that the study of talk has at least two major implications: 1) talk is one vehicle to learn, and 2) observing the talking of students gives us a window on the learning process. (Gilles & Pierce, 2003, p. 73)

Conversations in any classroom are important to examine as teachers assess student learning. In this section I begin with reviewing a portion of the work of Douglas Barnes, known for his research on classroom talk. Along with Barnes, I turn to several researchers who base their work on Barnes' research. Included in this section are such "talk" concepts as exploratory and presentational talk, the talk of student work groups, open and closed approaches to discussion, and the effect of conversation on social cohesion, all things to consider when teaching a unit which focuses on advertising media.

In the preface of their collection of articles written by educators who have been influenced by Douglas Barnes and his legacy of research in classroom talk, Mercer and Hodgkinson (2008) share the overriding premise of the compilation: "Classroom talk ... is the most important educational tool for guiding the development of understanding and for jointly constructing knowledge" (p. xi). Barnes writes in the opening chapter of the collection that he believes learning is "never truly passive" but active, as a learner attempts to "interrelate, to reinterpret, to understand new experiences and ideas" (p. 2). This active learning depends on building on what a learner already knows, in his "lived-in world" as well as experiences in social contexts, including the classroom (p. 14). He believes it is a teacher's central task to "set up situations and challenges that will encourage their pupils to relate new ideas and ways of thinking to existing understandings and expectations in order to modify them" (p. 4). He thinks of this as "working on understanding" (p. 4). A learner will soon forget information which is not connected to what he already knows. Piaget described two ways a learner connects information: through *assimilation*, which happens when ideas fit comfortably with what we already know; and through *accommodation*, which forces us to change our schemes

because the new information does not match our existing knowledge (Barnes, 1975/1992, referring to Piaget, p. 3). We reach understanding through assimilation and accommodation. Barnes believes the best way for "working on understanding" is often through talk. Much of the talk in classrooms is the talk of presentations used by teachers to deliver lectures and by students to recite lessons and provide answers to a teacher's question. Barnes calls this "presentational talk" (p. 5; also Barnes 1975/1992). While presentational talk is common in classrooms, Barnes believes more "exploratory talk" is necessary for students to work toward understanding (p. 5; also Barnes 1975/1992). Exploratory talk is "rough draft" talk, "hesitant and incomplete because it enables the speaker to try out ideas," to hear how their ideas sound, to see what others make of the ideas, and to arrange information and ideas into different patterns (p. 5). In exploratory talk, the speaker is more concerned with sorting out his or her own thoughts, rather than adjusting the language content and manner to the needs of an audience as in "final draft" presentational talk (p. 5). Barnes believes there is space for both exploratory and presentational talk in classrooms.

Since he believes as Vygotsky (1986) does, that all learning is social, Barnes continued his study of "talk as a tool of thinking" (p. 7) as he explored small group discussions. He identified two different approaches to learning used by group members: open approaches and closed approaches (1975/1992). Open approaches toward learning will further the discussion, while closed approaches will bring conversations to an end. Closed approaches apply pressure on the social relationships within the group when members ask for consensus or rely on ritual. A closed approach to discussion "can do

nothing but leave (the small group) where they were when they started" (Barnes 1975/1992, p. 49).

As Pierce and Gilles (2008) relate in the quote above, talk provides a "window" into students' thinking as they work on understanding. Although language cannot equal thought (Moffett, 1992), words spoken and written can begin to let teachers view the thinking students do. Working with teachers in different grades, Pierce and Gilles recorded and listened to student conversations as the students gathered in small literature discussion groups. Pierce and Gilles found students using the text of the book and drawing on each other's contributions as they engaged in critical conversations, a kind of talk which allowed students to "raise questions about the way things are, dream up possibilities about the way things could be, and then inspire others to join them in making changes" (p. 51). The exploratory talk the groups utilized is essential for making meaning (Pierce & Gilles). Also, as the small literature groups returned to an idea repeatedly, they were able to build a "more sophisticated appreciation for the nuanced meanings associated with the idea," a process Gilles refers to as "cycles of meaning" (p. 50; Pierce & Gilles, 1993).

Howe (1992) states the type of task assigned to a group results in different types of talking and thinking. Collaboration and a range of kinds of talking and thinking occur when teachers ask students to not only talk, but to also take some kind of action. Howe describes the taking of turns during small group discussions as short and long "turn-talking" (p. 35). Short turn-talking is similar to Barnes' exploratory talk, occurs in fragments, and is "entwined with others' utterances" (p. 35). Long-turn talking, comparable to Barnes' presentational talk, "requires the speaker to organise information

or ideas so that listeners can make sense of what is being said" (p. 35). Long-turn talk occurs when students assume the role of expert and communicate ideas which they have already thought through (p. 35).

Fox (2000) describes how the adolescents in the focus groups he interviewed used talk as a way to develop their understanding. Through conversation in these small groups, the adolescents were able to connect words to images, and images to words, as they connected the new ideas presented by their peers to knowledge already known:

...because many of these kids were reflecting on commercials out loud for the first time, their thinking often evolved *as they interacted during our small groups*. It's natural for all symbols – words, pictures, music, and the like – to generate thinking, which in turn often generates *more* thinking and symbols. This new thinking in turn modifies the kid's concept of the original symbols. Mixing one symbol system with another creates mental combustion. Mixing kids with other kids to explore commercials creates even more combustion. Meaning-making, especially as it occurred during these focus groups, was a social, evolving process subject to renegotiation and redefinition. (p. 26, Fox, 2000)

Discussion during group work may also be viewed through Hayakawa's (1939/1990) ideas of social cohesion and social control through language. For example, repetition can in some instances serve as an implied warning that if the conversation does not end, the mutual trust of the group will be broken down. The tendency to repeat directives, explicit or implied, is due to a "lingering belief in word-magic, the notion that, by saying things repeatedly ... we can cast a spell over the future and force events to turn out the way we" want them (p. 71).

In a small, unpublished study I undertook while taking a graduate course on talk in curriculum, I arranged for my undergraduate education students to work collaboratively on three different tasks. With their permission, I recorded and transcribed

their conversations. I found group members repeating "I don't know" and "I have no idea," both repetitions eventually closing the discussions. In other groups, members kept the discussion open by saying "that reminds me of" and "you know" and "what do you think?" While actual words keep discussions open or close them down, students in my class also used words during small talk as a way to ease into group work. I noticed that when each group of my students began the task assigned, they first asked for clarification of the task from others with questions such as, "What does she want us to do?" Their responses to each other sought to indicate that they were confused, and hoping that others were confused, so that they were all in the same boat of confusion, starting from scratch. Hayakawa explains that this small talk makes for social cohesion, and works as a way to make each member a part of the group: "With each new agreement, no matter how commonplace or obvious, the fear and suspicion of the stranger wears away, ... the possibility of friendship enlarges. ... and genuine communication and cooperation can begin" (p. 58). It seemed to me that the group members were not truly asking for clarification of the task, but instead "feeling out" the other members, establishing and opening a line of communication. Since the remark sounds familiar to the expected talk of groups made of people who do not know each other very well, and the remarks sound "right" to the role of students, the wall of suspicion is broken down, and the discomfort of the small group situation is eased (p. 59). About language used for social cohesion purposes, Hayakawa says, "many situations in life as well as in literature demand that we pay no attention to what the words say, since the meaning may often be a great deal more intelligent and intelligible than the surface *sense* of the words themselves" (p. 62). Relating to this, Marshall McLuhan (1964 and 1996) suggests that sometimes the content

of a message does not matter as much as the medium used to deliver the message, i.e., the medium is the message. I agree with both Hayakawa and McLuhan that sometimes the content of a message does not matter as much as how and why the message is delivered. An example of this is the lullaby "Rock-a-bye Baby," a tune I sang to my crying baby, which is soothing because of its melody, but disturbing in its text: "Rock-a-bye baby, in the treetop; when the wind blows, the cradle will rock; when the bough breaks, the cradle will fall; and down will come baby, cradle and all."

According to Gee, in order to belong to a particular social group, one must know the Discourse the group uses, its "identity kit" for members which includes "the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognize" (Gee, 1990, p. 142). Gee explains that each of us has multiple identities and a core identity that relates to all of our other identities (Gee, 2003). In my case, I identify myself, depending on the activity or event, as a female, mother, wife, grandmother, teacher, reader, writer, gardener, Christian, middle-class, white, American, graduate student, researcher. In each of my identities, I use different words, activities, gestures, and sometimes clothing, to show my membership, or, in other words, I use the D/discourse of the social group I am identifying with at the moment so that others recognize me as belonging to the group.

Gee distinguishes "big D" Discourse from "little d" discourse in a way to me which is similar to Paivio's (2006) discussion of logogens and imagens (see discussion below in "Reading and images"): "little d" discourse includes language used, and "big D" Discourse includes the visuals, clothes, gestures, tools, symbols, and emotions used. "Big D" Discourse always includes "little d" discourse and is always more than just

language. Gee represents the two together as D/discourse and says the key to D/discourses is "recognition" (Gee, 1999/2005). A person might use the discourse of a social group, but if his Discourse is inaccurate, he will not be recognized as a member of the group. An example of this is the difference between a person riding a Honda Gold Wing motorcycle and one riding a Harley-Davidson Ultra Classic motorcycle. Outsiders might view these groups as the same because they both ride motorcycles. Also, both the Gold Wing and Ultra Classic models are deluxe, having large passenger seats, trunks, sidesaddles, and intercom systems between driver and passenger. However, the social groups of riders of these two motorcycles are much different. Gold Wingers do not belong to the social group of Harley riders. Gold Wingers attend "Wing Dings" while Harley riders attend "H.O.G. Rallies" (Harley Owners Group). Gold Wingers dress in elastic-waist, knit pajama pants, while the uniform of the Harley rider includes black leather chaps and jackets with fringe and H-D logo tattoos. At a Hog Rally, a couple wearing matching purple-camouflage knit pants would not be recognized as a member of the social group, because the couple did not engage in the recognized Discourse of Harley riders. (Just for the record, I have been a rider of both models of motorcycles, and the Harley attitude is my favorite identity to wear.)

Regarding this study, I could easily place this discussion of Gee's D/discourse distinctions under "Creating and Composing Media" for the way the teacher in the present study asked the students to use the tools and technologies of the advertising culture to create advertisements. Regardless of where this discussion resides in this literature review, being able to easily use the D/discourses which lead to social goods in a society ("a good or service that benefits the largest number of people in the largest

possible way" *Investopedia*, 2011), allows membership in the "dominant group" of the society (Gee, 1990, p. 145):

Discourses are intimately related to the distribution of social power and hierarchical structure in society.... Control over certain Discourses can lead to the acquisition of social goods (money, power, status) in a society. ... These Discourses empower those groups who have the least conflicts with their other Discourses when they use them.... (Gee, 1990, p. 144-145)

In other words, knowing the Discourses of advertisers leads to empowerment of consumers. However, without reflecting on the effects of the Discourses, one may be led to accept the Discourses, identify himself as a member, and conform to the practices of the social group. Gee (2003) tells us, "How you approach reading and thinking about particular things depends on your experiences interacting with people who are members of your certain social group. You conform to your affinity group's social practices" (p. 142).

In this study, the teacher asked the students to reflect on the D/discourses of advertisers in order to not become advertisers themselves, but to understand the persuasive practices of this group. Also the study classroom had its own D/discourses which allowed students to participate as part of the seventh grade group and as developing citizens. The D/discourses of a classroom include its organization, the activities the teacher designs, the resources made available, as well as the language used, which Peter Johnston (2004) says includes the "pauses, coughs, sighs, frowns, postures" and words (p. 77), all of which children notice and which are important to their interpretations of messages. Regardless of our intentions, people make sense of what is said "given the immediate situation (as they understand it), their past experience, what has been said before, what is said afterward, and so forth" (p. 77). The design of the

classroom and the activities invites students to be the "kinds of people we think they are and gives them opportunities to practice being those kinds of people" (p. 79), giving them what Gee would call an "identity kit." Education researcher, Richard Allington, says about Peter Johnston's book, *Choice Words: How Our Language Affects Children's Learning* (2004), it provides a vocabulary to talk about classroom language and "provides the reader with powerful insights into just how forcefully language shapes thinking about reading and writing, and about becoming readers and writers and social beings" (Johnston, 2004, p. x). Johnston's book gives us a way to talk about the language used in our classrooms, and the thinking connected with that language.

In analyzing the different types of discussion in which students were engaged, I also considered Golding's continuum of educational constructivist discussions. Golding (2011) lists the characteristics shared by all constructivist discussions: students talking with each other and the teacher; students taking the time to think, reflect and evaluate; thought-provoking questions being asked and answered; inquiry into problems; the experience of cognitive conflict; and student conceptions being shared and revised (p. 469). Thinking of educational constructivist discussions resting on a continuum (see Figure 2), Golding places on one end the unstructured, student-directed discussion; on the other end of the continuum is an authoritative structure imposed by the teacher; and discussions in-between he calls "Community of Inquiry" which mirrors the types of discussions in which experts engage (p. 471). All can occur in a constructivist learning situation. Which is used is dependent on the teaching purpose.

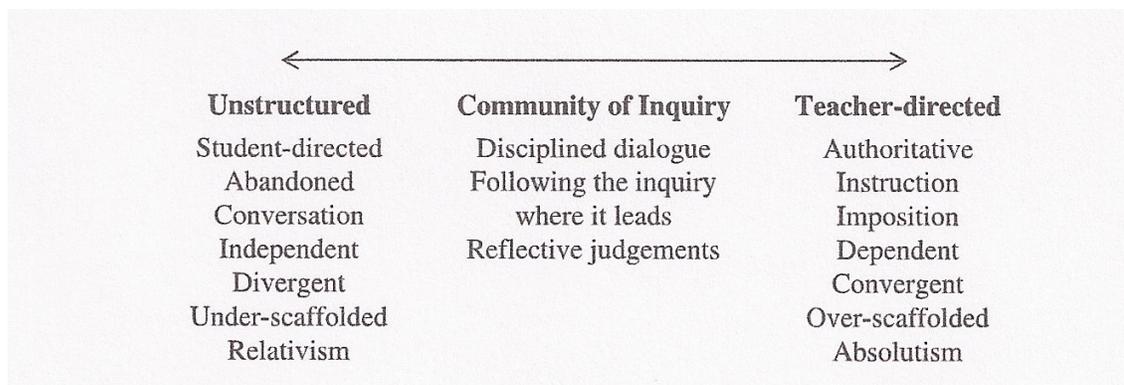


Figure 2 Elaborated continuum of constructivist discussions (Golding, 2011, p. 482)

Depending on their purpose, teachers choose the type of discussion for students to engage. If the purpose is to check understanding for a test, a teacher-directed discussion is appropriate. If the purpose is to build community amongst students, then an unstructured discussion may be best. If the purpose of the discussion is for students to "learn how to think like a scientist, a historian or a philosopher, then a Community of Inquiry involving the scaffolding of disciplined inquiry is most likely the best choice" (Golding, 2011, p. 482).

Golding believes that students' unstructured conversations have a purpose. These conversations establish relations for more critical discussions to occur. Unstructured brainstorming generates ideas from which solutions to problems can be found. Also in unstructured conversations, students reveal conceptions and misconceptions they hold. But unstructured conversations make little progress and are often abandoned. Teacher-directed discussions lead students to information the teacher wants students to know.

In order for discussions to be located within Golding's Community of Inquiry, students must assume the position of teacher themselves. This dialogue can occur after students have been trained in prompting with questions. Between the extreme ends of the

continuum, in the Community of Inquiry, students have the freedom to self-manage and self-direct their inquiries

There are other ways to discuss the thinking we teachers see in students' language, including Odell's (1999) characteristics of thinking and Moffett's (1992) mental growth sequence, discussed in the next section.

Levels of thinking. Lee Odell (1999) feels that even though thinking is a complex process that happens quickly and in leaps which are difficult to explain and impossible to predict, there are "fingerprints" of the thinking process contained in texts for which teachers can look (p. 8). These fingerprints are included in his framework for analyzing student writing:

- Dissonance - a sense that things just don't add up, that our understanding is incomplete, that something is incongruous
- Selecting - being able to pay attention to some things, deemphasize others, completely ignore others
- Encoding/Representing - representing what we selected in a variety of ways - visual images, music, numbers, written and spoken language - some way to represent what we're thinking, feeling, observing, remembering, reading
- Drawing on Prior Knowledge - trying to see how the present situation relates to what we already know
- Seeing Relationships - asking how one thing causes another, how things are similar or different, how something interacts with its physical or social setting

- Considering Different Perspectives - trying to empathize with another person or asking how someone else's perceptions or interpretations might differ from our own

Although Odell refers to written texts, we may be able to apply his framework to verbalized talk as well as the creation of advertisements and commercials.

Moffett (1992) offers a mental growth sequence teachers may use to assess student thinking during their observations of student activities and projects. His growth sequence suggests actions performed by students as they develop skills in verbal language and different modes of discourse, such as abstracting, naming, phrasing, stating, and chaining. Growth comes when one is able to analyze and synthesize simultaneously, being able to break wholes into parts and put parts into a whole, and being able to see likenesses and differences. In other words, growth in language, which can somewhat display growth in thought, comes with the ability of simultaneous differentiation and integration. In the thinking function of Naming, "things in the environment become increasingly singled out for learners ... they form increasingly separated concepts of these things" (p. 33). Learners will use concrete and abstract words to name things, and "both will be somewhat misused until the concept fills out in the other direction" (p. 34). Other skills Moffett describes include: phrasing (adding words or word clusters to modify a named concept; includes the use of metaphor and circumlocution); stating (joining subject and predicate with increasing modification in a clause, or statement; from the egocentric absence of necessary words, to more explicit communication); and chaining (reducing, embedding, and connecting clauses in increasingly complex ways, including

into sentences and paragraphs, as well as using transitions, grammar, punctuation, and organizational forms).

In this section, I have considered ways to assess thinking whether through language or writing. In the next section I turn to reading as it pertains to media.

Reading the Media

We sometimes view media without thinking about it, a viewing stance which my grandson refers to when he says, "Television makes my mind blank." But if we attempt to make meaning from viewing the media, we are "reading" the media. In this section I review reading theories which relate to reading media, and I also consider research on the involvement of feelings while reading media. I continue the section with general semantics principles related to reading, and conclude with a discussion of reading images, which are a major element in commercials and advertisements, as well as feeling and thinking. Again for me, the difficulty of attempting to separate these entangled areas surfaces.

Reading theories. I turn to Louise Rosenblatt (1904-2005) for reading theories related to reading/viewing the media, especially her transactional theory of reading, aesthetic-efferent stance continuum, and description of "evoking-a-poem" (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994, p. 48). Rosenblatt (1978/1994) suggested that the *meaning* of a text does not reside "in" the text or "in" the reader, but occurs during the transaction between reader and text. When approached with a situation or text to be read, the reader begins with expectations that he will read certain things, based on the genre of piece and the purpose of reading (whether for pleasure or for information). The reader brings his linguistic-experiential reservoir to bear on the text, a reservoir which consists of experiences the

reader had previously with similar situations and purposes. The reader begins reading and considers if what he read matched his expectations. If yes, he continues reading. If no, the reader revises his expectations based on the new experiences from the text being added to his linguistic-experiential reservoir. He then continues reading with the revised expectations, asking whether the information read matches his expectations. This transactional theory says we begin reading with expectations based on our linguistic-experiential reservoir which consists of our cultural, social and personal history as well as our past experiences with language and texts. We revise our expectations constantly as we select, synthesize, and organize the ideas based on our reservoir. Rosenblatt believes the linguistic and experiential background of our students can only be enriched through an aesthetic approach to reading, an approach to literature study which raises awareness of emotion as a first step to understanding and controlling emotions. However, it is common to find curriculum concerned with students "remembering and reiterating the content of stories, poems, and novels" (Anderson & Rubano, 1991, p. 1). Similar to Rosenblatt's transactional theory as it regards reading printed texts, Wysocki (2004) regards visual compositions as reciprocal communications which shape both the composer and the reader.

A reader transacts with a text beginning with a stance somewhere along a continuum between an aesthetic stance and an efferent stance and based on the situation and purpose for reading (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994, p. 35). A reader can move back and forth along this continuum as they read. A reader does very different activities during aesthetic and efferent stances. In an efferent stance, the reader approaches the text with the intent to retain, use, or act on information gleaned from it. In an aesthetic stance, the

reader is primarily interested in what happens during the reading, the feelings, ideas, scenes, and emotions experienced, the "living through during his relationship with that particular text" (p. 25). Rosenblatt believes a reader must re-create a work in order to truly understand it, and that "the benefits of literature can emerge only from creative activity on the part of the reader" (Anderson & Rubano, 1991, quoting Rosenblatt, p. 7). She believes in the construction of meaning, "constructive thinking," and that "reason should arise in a matrix of feeling" (p. 7). Literature uses affective elements to nourish us, creating an aesthetic. Literature is meant to be read for enjoyment and for the contribution it can make to readers' lives. Hayakawa (1990) believes our psychological health can be nourished by literature:

that introduces us to new sources of delight; literature that makes us feel that we are not alone in our misery; literature that shows us our own problems in a new light; literature that suggests new possibilities to us and opens new areas of possible experience; literature that offers us a variety of "symbolic strategies" by means of which we can "encompass" our situations. (p. 155)

Unfortunately, schools most often privilege the efferent stance, over the nourishing aesthetic stance, asking students literal comprehension questions, without moving to higher-order reading and thinking skills which begin with the aesthetic response and leads to a critical analysis of the text.

The evocation from reading a text may depend on whether we have approached the text from an aesthetic or efferent stance. Rosenblatt explains that when an event is read or viewed, the reader / viewer comes away with an "evocation" of the text or the event, a "blending and balancing of overtones, attitudes, feelings and ideas" (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994, p. 69). An evocation occurs when a reader transacts with signs, transforms these signs to "verbal symbols, with their sensed auras, and organizes an experienced

meaning," or "the work" (p. 69). The reader may later seek to recall this evocation and reflect upon it, which becomes a "re-experiencing, a reenacting, of the work-as-evoked" (p. 134). This reflection is an interpretation of the work, an effort to describe in some way the nature of the lived-through evocation of the work (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994). Taking an aesthetic stance asks the reader to be aware of his emotional response to a text, but it does not stop with that emotional response, as Rosenblatt explains:

The aesthetic stance should not be confused with free association or a simple reverie ... the concept of transaction emphasizes the relationship with, and continuing awareness of the text ... during the literary experience, concentration on the words of the text is perhaps even more keen than in an efferent reading ... the aesthetic stance heightens awareness of the words as signs with particular visual and auditory characteristics and as symbols. (quoting Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 29, Soter, et al., 2010, p. 211)

Personal response is important to constructing meaning from a text. However, personal response is not the "end product" for Rosenblatt. The next section elaborates on the personal, emotional responses to texts.

Reading and feeling.

Because emotions play such a large role in our processing of media, it's important to place them on the table so we can begin to gain critical distance from them. (Fox, 2001a, p. 18)

As Fox says in the quote above, when we view, or read, media, we must place our emotions "on the table," but we cannot forget about our emotions. It is the transaction between text and reader that helps us to make meaning, and our feelings are part of that transaction. While our personal connections and other affective responses to a text are legitimate reading responses, it is the combination of our feelings with techniques within the text which qualifies as Rosenblatt's aesthetic response (Soter, et al., 2010, p. 210).

Simply laying our feelings on the table without reflecting further on the reason we reacted the way we did to a text, is a reader's response, but only a first step towards developing "literary sensibility, or what Rosenblatt termed 'sensitivity to techniques of literature'" (quoting Rosenblatt, 1978/1994, Soter, et al., 2010 p. 210).

Soter, et al. (2010) propose a third stance be added to Rosenblatt's aesthetic - efferent continuum: the expressive stance. The expressive stance would be a descriptor for affective (personal, emotional) and experiential responses, responses which do not reach the quality necessary to be called Rosenblatt's aesthetic response: "Honest recognition of one's own reaction is not in itself sufficient to ensure sound critical opinion" (quoting Rosenblatt, 1978/1994, p. 72; Soter et al., 2010, p. 207). See Figure 3 below for a discussion of the differences between Rosenblatt's aesthetic response and Soter and her colleagues' proposed third stance of expressive response to literature, based in their analysis of over 300 scholarly products. Soter et al. derive the term "expressive

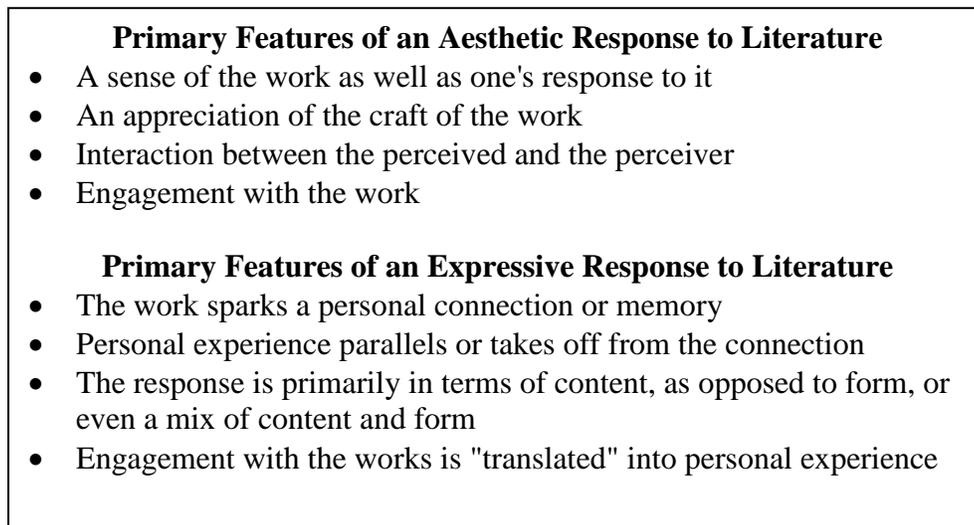


Figure 3. Distinguishing features of an aesthetic and an expressive response to literature (Soter, et al., 2010, p. 214)

response" from Jakobson's (1960 and 1987) functions of language, which defines the "expressive" or "emotive" function of language as "that which is focused on the speaker and in which the speaker utters a 'direct expression of his or her attitude toward what he or she is speaking about'" (quoting Jakobson, 1987, p. 44, Soter, et al., 2010, p. 209).

James Britton also utilized Jakobson's functions of language theory in his study on the development of writing. Britton, et al. (1975) believes language development is enhanced by approaching a text in an aesthetic manner. In his study of the development of writing as it relates to the development of thinking, he concludes all writing originates with the expressive, what he describes as "writing that is thinking aloud" (p. 89). With expressive writing as the fulcrum of a continuum, and depending on the purpose of your writing, you move towards one end of the continuum closer to transactional writing, which is the writing of work, or you move along the continuum to the opposite end closer to poetic writing, "language as art medium" (p. 90). The function of poetic writing is to "please or satisfy the writer and the reader's response is to share the satisfaction" (p. 90). Britton writes that expressive writing, the thinking aloud, is the "Verbalization of exclamations, fear, joy, and pain made when there is no one to hear and possibly not understandable" (p. 90).

One of the most effective and efficient vehicles to elicit emotions is the use of symbolspeak, defined as "the use of symbols to distort reality *slightly* to mislead *a little bit* (and sometimes, even to lie)" (Fox, 1994, p. 69). Advertisers focus their messages on emotions through values, attitudes, feelings, sensations, passions, and sentiments, and not on logic, proof, or argument (Fox). Emotion is the main ingredient of visual

symbolspeak and is based in physiological arousal (Fox). An example of this physiological arousal is a person's cheeks turning red and palms sweating when nervous. Advertisers use warm and cool images to cause emotional transformations in viewers. A warm image draws the viewer into the image, up-close and personal, while a cool image allows the viewer to remain a detached observer (Fox, pp. 79-86). Research shows body temperature actually rises when a person is shown warm images. The changes in body temperature can be seen easily through thermometer stickers placed on the forehead, and in a popular toy, the mood ring, both of which change colors as the body's temperature fluctuates forcing the liquid crystals to change their light transmission properties (Katz, 2002).

Fox tells us "the more intense the emotional experience" given by an image-filled text, "the more effective the message, for it provides us with an experience that differs from what we would normally expect" (Fox, 1994, p. 87). I take up the discussion of symbolspeak again in the next section as I continue to follow the twisting strands of topics relating to the present study of research related to reading and images.

Reading and images.

Things are essential, words only accidental; things are the body, words but the garment; things are the kernel, words the shell and husk. Both should be presented to the intellect at the same time, but particularly the things, since they are as much objects of understanding as is language.
~ J.A. Comenius, *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, 1658 (Piaget, 1993).

These ideas of educational pioneer, Jan Amos Comenius, written over three centuries ago, have continued importance in education today, especially with the intense media stimulation which reigns. Comenius' work, translated from Latin to mean "the world explained in pictures" is cited by Piaget in 1993, and by Allan Paivio (2006, p. 2)

as support of the need to concretize knowledge for children through both imagery and pictures. Paivio proposes a "dual coding theory" (p. 3) which says that cognition involves the activity of two subsystems: a verbal system, specialized for dealing with language, and a nonverbal (imagery) system specialized for dealing with nonlinguistic objects and events. Underlying both of these systems is "imaging" which is the act of experiencing mental images and which is connected to all senses (Thompson, 1994, p. 30). When one "recognizes, manipulates, or just thinks about words or things," the systems are activated, represented by either logogens in verbal events, or imagens in nonverbal events (Paivio, 2006, p. 3). The systems are "modality-specific," meaning there are different logogens and imagens corresponding to visual, auditory, and emotion, and to motor properties of language and objects (p. 3). Whether the event activates a logogen or imagen first, continued processing may occur in either the verbal or nonverbal system. Fox (1994) explains this to mean that "action within one system can also cause activity in the other: words may arouse other words, or they may arouse images; likewise, images may arouse other images, or they may arouse words" (p. 8). Fox references this phenomenon in *Harvesting Minds* (2000) as to include not just images, but other nonlinguistic events such as music and gestures as well.

Paivio's dual coding theory explains the importance of images in understanding our world, but to read images used in advertisements may require learning a certain discourse (see D/discourses discussed above in "Thinking and language"), as Gee (2003) explains:

(B)eing able to 'read' the images in advertising is one type of visual literacy. And, of course, there are different ways to read such images, ways that are more or less aligned with the intentions and interests of the advertisers. (p. 13)

Images hold power and arouse viewers' feelings. Symbolspeak, defined earlier as "the use of symbols to distort reality *slightly* to mislead *a little bit* (and sometimes, even to lie)" (Fox, 1994, p. 69), results from the "skillfully manipulated ambiguity of images, for which we are easy prey" (Fox, 1994, p. 70). Ambiguity refers to vagueness. The more ambiguous a message is, the harder we work to construct meaning from it, which means we participate more in the message. With this increased participation comes increased emotional involvement. Makers of image-filled messages "desire some uncertainty: they do not state directly what they want us to believe, but rather suggest it through visual elements and their interplay with verbal elements" (p. 72). We are easy prey to the influence of images because we are conditioned to accept and trust what we see (Bronowski, 1978). When we encounter images, we also feel as if we construct our own meaning from them.

Because image makers know that meaning is personally constructed, they allow room or ambiguity for each of us to enter into the message and make our own transformation. Also, a series of images often creates a sense of conflict, as images of one kind bump into images of another kind, creating something different in the process. (Fox, 1994, p. 81)

Emotional experiences "transform" viewers (Fox). When advertisers offer the viewer an experience with a product which differs from what they expect, the viewer experiences feelings, and are thereby transformed a bit. With a series of cool-to-warm images, the viewer may move from observer to participant, from far-away to up-close, from impersonal to personal, from relative equilibrium to disequilibrium (Fox, p. 85). In a world filled with "streams of images," in order to survive, we change our way of thinking from the old-fashioned, linear verbal thinking, to "depend more and more on a type of thinking that is imagistic, associational, intuitive, quicksilver" (Fox, 1994, p. 70).

Because advertising images are constructed by others in a way to elicit certain emotions, our associations are controlled by others, even while we still feel we construct our own meaning from them. The quickness of this stream of images does not allow us an opportunity to slow down and reflect on our responses to them. Messages demand that we participate in them, and this participation requires images and emotion (Fox).

Fox describes four levels of symbolspeak: verbal, verbal-with-visual, visual-with-verbal, and visual. In a spectrum moving from verbal to visual levels, the amount of images increases, as well as the ambiguity caused by the images. It is the increasing ambiguity which necessitates an increase in viewer involvement in constructing meaning, which leads to increased emotional involvement (Fox). The verbal end of the spectrum consists mostly of imageless language, but we know from Paivio's dual coding theory that verbal and visual processes cannot be separated, and images are still at play in verbal symbolspeak. Verbal-with-visual includes words which suggest a picture; visual-with-verbal contains both words and pictures with the pictures dominating; and visual symbolspeak involves only images, e.g., a company's logo. Visual symbolspeak may be the most effective in influencing our emotions, because a picture with few or no words provides the best way to know the unknown, and because we believe what we see, if we see it, we believe that we understand it (Fox, p. 78).

Fox (1994) relates principles of gestalt psychology to reading images. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica (2011), Gestalt psychology, founded in the 20th century, is considered the foundation of the study of perception. The German word *Gestalt* means the way a thing has been "placed" or "put together" (2011). The first principle of gestalt which Fox relates to reading images is "a whole is greater than or different from its parts"

(Fox, 1994, p. 9). Because of this, gestaltists believe we should view phenomenon as a whole before analyzing its parts. The second principle is that the whole interacts with its components. This interaction causes the viewer to naturally drive toward simplicity, toward the "simplest, most regular, most symmetrical organization available" (Arnheim, 1992, p. 207). The drive toward simplicity reduces tension and is often found in nature. Arnheim believes, though, that there is also a "counter-tendency" to simplicity - "one that forms and articulates shapes, segregating and differentiating structures" (Fox, 1994, p. 9). This counter-tendency occurs in nature with gravity and electricity, and actually increases tension. Arnheim concludes that perception is the interaction between the opposing tensions: one which simplifies perceptions and one that forms perceptions. The key is balance between the two (Fox, p. 9-10). A more detailed discussion of research areas involved in image studies is found in Fox's chapter "Image Studies: An Interdisciplinary View" in the text he edited, *Images in Language, Media, and Mind* (1994).

The present study focuses on the reading of advertising media by young adults. These multimodal texts require students to construct meaning from written text, visuals, and elements of design (Gee, 2003; Jewitt & Kress, 2003). Students and teachers need knowledge of various sign systems, including visual, used in the production and interpretation of multimodal texts. Calling students' attention to the various components of a multimodal text is important (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Serafini, 2011). Serafini suggests teachers become familiar with elements of art theory and criticism, grammar of visual design, and media literacy.

Regarding art theory and criticism, Serafini describes Panofsky's (1955) three levels of meaning in analyzing a piece of art: pre-iconographic, iconographic, and

iconological. The pre-iconographic level focuses on identifying the visual data. Naming these elements helps develop a vocabulary which aids in describing and interpreting multimodal texts and "allows readers to take a more critical reading position and interrogate the structures and components that authors, illustrators, and designers use to convey meanings (Zammit, 2007)" (Serafini, 2011, p. 344).

The iconographic level focuses on experience while interpreting, moving from the denotative level of pre-iconographic to the connotative level. The third level, iconological, is where the "ideological and cultural meanings of an image [are] constructed in particular social, political, and historical contexts (Duncum, 2004)" (Serafini, 2011, p. 344). Noticing and naming elements of images, using experiences to consider what the elements might mean, and using inferences drawn from social, political, and historical worlds, is an important aspect of the comprehension process (Serafini, 2011). It is also similar to Rosenblatt's (1978/1994) transactional theory of reading where a reader brings to a text his linguistic-experiential reservoir, which consists of his cultural, social and personal history as well as his past experiences. The reader uses this reservoir plus an aesthetic stance towards the text to create meaning from the text. Serafini believes that if readers do not name, notice, and consider the meanings of the elements of an image, they will not be able to use this information during their interpretative processes (p. 345).

In addition to art theory, Serafini suggests three structures drawn from Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) grammar and structures of visual design are essential to understanding multimodal texts: composition, perspective, and visual symbols. Studying the way objects are organized and positioned, as well as the size of the objects, color and

contrast, and foregrounding and focus, will develop a vocabulary and focus students' attention on elements to consider while interpreting a visual image. Perspective includes distance from and angle of the camera, and asks readers to consider characters and objects and their relationships in an image. Visual symbols convey a theme or meaning, such as a cross signifying Christian values and a rose signifying love. Identifying the meanings of these symbols moves the reader "beyond literal of denotative interpretations to consider connections to the connotative levels of meaning (Barthes, 1977)" (Serafini, 2011, pp. 346-347).

Combining art theory and the grammar of visual design with media literacy, Serafini believes gives young adults the strategies, vocabularies, and processes for interpreting the media which surrounds them. While each area begins with noticing and naming elements in an image, Serafini believes this is only a foundation for comprehension and that interpretation should not stop there. "Moving beyond the literal level of meaning requires that readers infer from other texts and contexts to make sense of what they read and view" (Serafini, 2011, p. 348, referencing Serafini & Ladd, 2008).

The next section, "Reading and general semantics," continues the discussion of the reading of images as general semantics tells us verbal reports are not the same as actual experience because the "word is not the thing" (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990, p. 17). Words are symbols. Images are symbols. General semantics tells us that actual experience must take precedence over symbols about that experience.

Reading and general semantics. General semantics principles have appeared in previous sections in this literature review regarding thinking, and they appear once again in this discussion of reading research. In addition to the ladder of abstraction and the idea

of maps and territories, are the ideas of "the word is not the thing," judgments, and word connotations.

The semantics principle referred to as "the word is not the thing," leads to a type of affective response. Ong (2002, 1982) and Lutz (1996) wrote that in order to control something, you must first name it. Lutz says, "Those who put labels on things exercise great power, for the consequences of labels are significant and far-reaching" (p. 48). Labels, though, are not the thing labeled. When we identify the symbol with the thing for which it stands, we make a signal reaction. A signal reaction is "an automatic, unthinking response to a symbol that occurs whether or not the conditions warrant" (p. 49). Automatic reactions block the development of our minds (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990). A signal reaction is different from a symbol reaction. A symbol reaction is a "delayed reaction, a reaction that is conditional upon the circumstances" and involves analysis and thought (p. 50). Signal reactions are important to advertising. Advertisers want people to react automatically when they hear a product's name or hear the company's slogan. These signal reactions "short-circuit" thought, leading to "an automatic, unthinking reaction," rather than "a thoughtful, considered response" (p. 53). In other words, signal reactions stop thinking.

Brand loyalty is a signal reaction. In Joanne McGlynn's English 11 classroom, she asked students to list five brands of products to which they were loyal and free write about the products. While one girl insisted she was loyal to no brands, another said, "I'll never let a drop of Coke pass my lips" (Hobbs, 2007, p. 63). Because of their emotional attachment to brands, students had much to write and groaned when McGlynn called time to stop writing. This free writing exercise helped activate students' personal response to

brands, and the discussion following the exercise was lively, with nearly all students participating: "Through the in-class freewriting activity, students reflected more deeply on how advertising provides pleasure by constructing an association between a human value and a product, situating people in the social role of consumer" (p. 63).

Advertisers use symbols to create "emotional bonds between a product and a feeling" to guide emotional and cultural behavior (Hobbs, 2007, p. 64). Through deconstructing advertisements using freewriting, students begin to distance themselves from the advertisement in order to understand what media creation techniques are driving a first emotional reaction (Hobbs, 2007; McBrien, 1999; Fox, 2000). Once distance is achieved, students can then effectively analyze advertisements for creator's purpose and intent. Distancing means "knowing why you respond in a certain way, as well as seeing from afar -- describing and evaluating commercials as if you were looking down upon them and could exercise control over them" (Fox, 2000, p. 63).

Hugh Rank's (1976) intensify/downplay schema is another tool to use for deconstructing texts (see Appendix D). Wanting a simple teaching tool to use in classrooms to teach kids about propaganda, Hugh Rank, original chairman of the NCTE Committee on Public Doublespeak, created the intensify/downplay schema. Rank concerned himself with the most common patterns used to intensify and downplay in communication, persuasion and propaganda. The three most common ways to intensify are easily recognizable: repetition, association, and composition. The most common downplay techniques are more difficult to analyze because, while intensifying puts information overtly to the front, downplaying obscures bits of information through

omission, diversion and confusion. Viewers must use extra effort to seek out this hidden information. Rank explains the opposing forces in the Intensify/Downplay Schema:

If one intensifies by repeating things frequently, then one can downplay by omitting them. If one intensifies by association, which brings things together, then one can downplay by diversion, which splits things apart. If one intensifies by composition, which lends order and coherence, then one can downplay by confusion, which creates disorder and incoherence. (Rank in Dieterich, 1976 p. 12)

Judgments also pose a barrier to clear thinking. A judgment clouds the interpretation of all further thinking on a subject, as further thoughts must be interpreted in relation to the judgment. Judgments, carelessly made inferences, and signal reactions often prevent us from seeing facts directly in front of us and keeping our minds closed (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990). Hayakawa believes the use of language in judgments function to affect us through our feelings. Affective language, he says, is a force used upon us. Affective elements include a tone of voice of a speaker and the rhythm of words often created by repetition of similar sounds. Advertisers use rhythm and alliteration in their slogans to "set up small rhythmic echoes in one's head that make them annoyingly difficult to forget" (p. 43). These echoing rhythms are effective especially in verbal replays (Fox, 2000) of jingles sung repeatedly by young children, who "can't be turned off as a (television) set can" (Packard, 1957/2007, p. 155).

Fox (2000) describes this type of response to advertisements as "replay behaviors." Replay behaviors include "any type of actions initiated by kids that repeat or reconstruct a commercial -- or parts of a commercial" and serve as prompts to "evoke all or parts of the original ad's message" (p. 91). Replays, though, do not represent students creating meaning through a transaction with the "text" of commercials, only a mirroring of the original commercial. Fox lists replay behaviors of three types: verbal, where

language is used; physical, where imitations of actions or scenes are used; and mental, where thinking and dreams contain commercial features. Fox concluded in his study that student replays directly imitated the original commercials; that the replays occur so quickly that students never had a chance to reflect, debate, or think critically about the ads; and the replays occurred in and outside of school. Of replays, Fox writes "the time and energy devoted to the replays by students merely displaced time and energy needed for academic, cultural, or personal learning" (p. 124). As Paivio (1986) found through his research, words elicit other words or images for us, and equally, images can elicit other images or words. Fox noted that "music, words, phrases, and images evoke *other* music, words, phrases, and images - in effect creating a commercial echo chamber" (Fox, 2000, p. 94).

Another affective element to be aware of as one that elicits emotions, Hayakawa teaches that words can also have positive connotations (purr words) and negative connotations (snarl words) when used in reports and advertising. Hayakawa says we can improve our resistance to the affective elements of language through social experience, through contact with many kinds of people in many kinds of situations, and through literary study.

...by conversation and gesture when we can see each other, but by literature and other arts when we cannot -- we come to understand each other, to cease being brutishly suspicious of each other, and gradually to realize the profound community that exists between us and our fellow human beings. (Hayakawa, 1990, p. 89)

Hayakawa shows us again, another reason to study literature, in order for us to become less suspicious of "our fellow human beings" (p. 89) and as a result, perhaps, then to become less suspicious of advertising media in order to understand our reactions to it.

The next section includes ways we create and compose in relation to media and in the process of creating and composing, become better able to critically analyze advertising media for our benefit as consumers.

Creating and Composing Media

In this study, the environment and activities designed by the teacher led the seventh graders to be motivated and engaged. These adolescents played with ideas, words and situations as they wrote scripts for the final project commercials. This, I believe, warrants a discussion of the importance of play at any age as a way to create, as a way to develop skills in socialization and skills in different genres of writing, and as a way to experience life from different perspectives. After a discussion of research on play, I continue with research support for composition, including process writing and other creative pursuits in a media literacy classroom including drama, the arts, and the creative production of media.

Play to create and compose. Play is important to a child's development not only for the social interaction it provides, but also for the motivation it brings to learning situations. Vygotsky (1986) reminds us that all learning is social. Children learn best when challenged, but only to the point of needing assistance from a more expert other. The more expert other may be a teacher or a more experienced peer. Vygotsky says, "What the child can do in cooperation today he can do alone tomorrow" (p. 188). Vygotsky identifies the difference between a child solving problems on his own versus solving problems with assistance as a person's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD is where learning takes place. In play, a child acts as if he is already competent

in the activity engaged in. When the child acts with this competence, "as though he were a head taller than himself" (p. 102), it is as though he has been pushed into his ZPD (Wilhelm, 2002). Play involves representation. In play, children engage in trial and error, make connections to what they know and use those connections to continue exploring. Play is an "opportunity to break the rules, open the door of discovery and thereby create" (Goldberg, 2001, p. 54). McKenna (2007) writes of the need for creative thinkers:

The world we are leaving to our children and students is one that demands that they be creators of knowledge. ... our students cannot survive in this world simply by being receptacles of knowledge; they must also be creative problem solvers. (p. 181)

Bettelheim (1987) explains that in today's world children need less structured time in order to daydream and develop an "inner life," which, he says, is "one of the most constructive things a growing child can do" (Introductory section, para. 12). Important to the present study, where adolescents were involved in what might be called play during production workshop, is the idea that play is a creative activity, and that indulging in play often leads to the formation of new ideas and solutions to problems as a result of "playful activity whereby something interesting occurred" (Goldberg, 2001, p. 53).

Improvisation is a type of play. Musicians improvise by playing with sounds. Adolescents in this study played with ideas while writing scripts for their commercials, engaging in improvisation as they wrote together with group members. Writing scripts, or plays, is the least abstracted, most detailed telling of a story possible, when the plot is based on experience. When students have experience with writing plays, this experience tends to show in other writing. Students' narrative writing tends to contain just the right amount of detail, and their formal writing improves as students hear the difference

between casual conversational voices and formal writing voices. During performances, students reread, revise, and share their plays, giving and getting feedback from peers as to what sounds right. This helps with formal writing by helping them discriminate between inner and outer voices. In addition, this constant negotiating during performance helps students determine the qualities of good writing (Moffett, 1983). This negotiation is similar to negotiating rules for playing games. When children are left to determine their own rules, they "develop their abilities to reason, to judge what is appropriate and what is not, to weigh arguments, to learn how consensus can be reached and how important such consensus is to the launching of an enterprise" (Bettelheim, 1987, *Play, Games, and Rules* section, para. 3). These social skills, learned in a natural setting, are important skills for participation in society.

Wilhelm (2002) uses enactments, or performances, in classrooms to motivate learners. In his and Michael Smith's study (2002) *Reading Don't Fix No Chevys* they found that what these unmotivated adolescents wanted in their classroom was more fun, humor, laughter, and a chance to lose themselves in a task. Enactments, Wilhelm found, engaged these adolescents by the playful nature of the activity. He cited several theorists who demonstrated that learning is most powerful when students are having fun (Bloom 1976; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi, Rathund, and Whalen, 1993; Hillocks, 1999; Heath and McLaughlin, 1993; Vygotsky, 1986). When learning occurs in the ZPD with its "delightfully difficult" challenge (Watson, 1996, p. 194), and when students believe they will be successful, and that there is personal reason and purpose to learn, the activity may be said to have "flow" conditions (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The conditions of flow include: choice and control; social interaction and involvement; a sense of

developing competence; active assistance to meet new challenges; and connection to high levels of personal relevance and social significance (Wilhelm, 2002). Csikszentmihalyi's research shows that "when students engage in challenging activities, their three major reasons for doing so include: It is fun, I enjoy it, and I enjoy using what I have learned" (Wilhelm, 2002, p 29).

Much learning goes on with drama and enactments. Drama is transformative, getting students' minds to move to new places and to be transformed. Drama is action-oriented and participatory, requiring students to work together, listen to each other, and create meaning together. It requires active involvement of all parties and provides a variety of roles and ways to participate. Dramas begin with and are driven by student interests, by what they already know, what they find significant, and by what is socially relevant. Drama lets children take on roles that make them think critically about the story and the experiences of the characters, which may be different from their own. Children also experience different voices, opening avenues of thinking more deeply about others, about different lives, perspectives, possibilities, and consequences (Goldberg, 2001; Wilhelm, 2002).

Arts other than drama are also motivators to engage students in learning. The arts develop cognitive functions (Eisner, 2002) through offering opportunities to notice the world. Arts provide permission to engage the imagination as a means for exploring new possibilities and to develop a disposition to tolerate ambiguity, to explore what is uncertain, to exercise judgment free from prescriptive rules and procedures. Arts help to stabilize what would otherwise be evanescent or hard to hold (Homer's "winged words"). Arts also invite us to explore our interior landscape, thus allowing us to discover what it

is that we are capable of experiencing. Divergent thinking during problem solving is developed through experiences in the arts where we become open to possibilities and are able to visualize a range of possible solutions to different situations (Smith, 1990; Eisner, 2002).

Multiple rhetorical modes to create and compose. A key component some media literacy educators use is time and space in their curriculum for students to create their own media (Kellner & Share, 2007; Semalie, 2003; McBrien, 1999). Students in the study classroom created their own multi-media commercials and advertisements. Before I go into a discussion of research supporting the creation of multi-media compositions, I begin with a bit of written composition research, specifically, the writing as a process movement.

Before the 1970s, several theorists wrote about composing practices in ways which were helpful to teachers, including James Moffett and Peter Elbow. In 1971, Janet Emig (1971) conducted a seminal study using direct observations of the composing processes of twelfth grade students. In her review of research literature on creativity and composing, Emig noted a discrepancy between what composition texts and handbooks stated about composition and statements made by professional writers, including the practice and value of outlining as a prewriting strategy. One source Emig cites is Warriner's *English Grammar and Composition*, 11 (1958), which states that there are three stages of composition which are "almost always the same for any form of writing" and which proceed "according to certain definite steps": choose a subject; prepare the material (from rough ideas to final outline); and write, beginning with a rough form and ending in finished form (Emig, 1971, quoting Warriner, p. 15). Dissatisfied with

composition research and theories, Emig turned to theories of creativity from Herman Helmholtz, Graham Wallas (1926), R.N. Wilson (1954), and Malcolm Cowley (1961) to create a guide when considering the composing processes of her students. Wallas (1926) reported a talk given in 1891 by the physicist, Herman Helmholtz, who shared that he felt there were three stages to creating: preparation, incubation, and illumination. Wallas added a fourth stage to Helmholtz's list: verification. In 1954, Wilson's four stages included: perception, acquisition of technique, envisioning, and elucidation of the vision. In 1961, Cowley gave his four stages to creating as finding the germ of the story, meditation, first draft, and final revision. Emig combined these four theories from the field of creative thinking to create a way to view her students' composition practices.

The way Emig conducted her study was ground-breaking the research in the process writing movement. She observed real students writing, real writers are work. Emig asked the students to think aloud while composing, and this study served as an impetus to other researchers to "carefully and systematically" look at individual writers to determine writing processes. In 1975, Donald Graves sat beside second graders as they composed. He found that children *can* write and that their writing processes, like adults, do not follow the linear logic of textbooks of plan-write-edit. Sondra Perl in 1979 found that her basic writers, whether they wrote well or not, also have consistent composing processes. Composition research studies had attempted to follow experiential research design, in that they tried to control the variables. To study the composing process in both naturalistic and controlled settings, Carol Berkenkotter (1983) observed writer and teacher, Donald Murray, as he wrote both in her office and at home. She found that composing processes are "affected by the contexts in which writers locate and find

themselves" (Perl, 1994, p. xv) and that researchers should be aware that trying to control variables, will lessen the credibility of their findings for composition practices outside of natural settings. Along this line, Irmischer (1987) encouraged researchers to use case studies and ethnographies in order to "present the fullness of experience" in composition practices (p. xvii). Research into composition processes led to "an understanding of the complex relationship between writers and the contexts that shape their lives" (p. xvii).

In the 1980s several researchers advocated that writing is a recursive process as Sondra Perl (1994) writes:

throughout the process of writing, writers return to substrands of the overall process, or subroutines (short successions of steps that yield results on which the writer draws in taking the next set of steps); writers use these to keep the process moving forward. (Perl, 1994, p. 100)

Recursiveness in writing implies both forward-moving action as well as backward-moving action (p. 100). Visible backward, or recurring, movements include re-reading bits of the writing, recalling a keyword or item in order to get the writing going when stuck, and a pausing by the writer where he appears to be listening to some idea inside himself, referred to as a "felt sense" (p. 101).

From my own writing experiences, I agree there is a recursiveness to writing, where revisioning and editing can occur during the prewriting and drafting stage, and vice versa, all dimensions of writing creation occurring in a non-linear process. I noted this recursiveness in the seventh grade classroom, and became increasingly interested in the numerous revisions the students made throughout the script-writing and commercial-filming processes. The students revised without directives from their teacher and without direct instruction on how to do so. They seemed to have the "felt sense" that they knew how commercials were supposed to sound and look like, and they revised until they were

satisfied with the results. Nancy Sommers (1980) reviews how the early belief that the writing process is linear actually reduces revision to being "superfluous and redundant" (p. 76). She writes how Gordon Rohman's (Rohman & Wlecke, 1964) suggestion that the composing process moves from prewriting to writing to rewriting, and Britton, et al.'s (1975) suggestion that revision is "simply the further growth of what is already there" (Sommers, 1980, p. 76), do not give revision its due place in the writing process. Sommers writes that Rohman's and Britton's suggestions actually "blind our students to what is actually involved in revision" (p. 84) making them unable to "see" their work "with different eyes" (p. 77). She defines revision as "a sequence of changes in a composition -- changes which are initiated by cues and occur continually throughout the writing of a work" (p. 77). Sommers studied both student writers and experienced writers and identified four revision operations: deletion, substitution, addition, and reordering. She found student writers are willing to revise, but did not have the tools to do so, other than to delete and substitute words and phrases. She suggested the reason for having so few tools of revision was due to students only seeing their writing through the eyes of former teachers and textbooks, and feeling bound to rules learned. Experienced writers in her study, though, saw their writing as a whole, not just words and phrases, but a whole piece that "both precedes and grows out of an examination of the parts" (p. 83). Experienced writers, Sommers found, were willing to add and reorder until they satisfied the incongruence between their intended vision and execution of their written piece. This "complicated relationship between the parts and the whole in the work of experienced writers" destroys the linear model (p. 83). Experienced writers also realize that the writing process is recursive, that revision occurs not just once but in "successive cycles"

(p. 84), that they should never "fall in love" with what they write in a first or second draft (p. 81), and that a "piece of writing is never finished, just abandoned" (p. 81).

Moffett (1983) contends that "writing in a form one reads makes a more perceptive reader" (p. 371) and that writing advertisements are easy for children because of the "immersion in this medium our culture affords" (p. 370). He adds that exploring the techniques used to create ads and other propaganda "has the effect of preventing youngsters from being taken in by them" (p. 370). Creating print and commercial advertisements is work that combines different modes -- images, text, gestures, song, speech -- into a multi-modal composition. Within multimodal texts, images often communicate different things from the words, and the combination of these two modes communicates things that neither of the modes does separately (Gee, 2003). Meaning and knowledge are built up through various modalities, not just words (Gee, 2003).

When students take an active role in creating media, they achieve a deeper understanding of rhetorical choices available to meaning-makers (Sheppard, 2009). Students practice production techniques and decision-making when they actually write, film, edit, revise and produce their own media. People are left feeling "powerless about matters of public discourse" when they believe they do not possess the expertise or know-how to create media (Fox, 2000 p. 165). In critical media literacy, producing alternative media texts that challenge messages in dominant discourse allows students to analyze relations among media, audience, information, and power (Kellner & Share, 2007). The process of creating their own media messages can help students "understand how media acts as a frame and filter on the world while appearing as a clear window" (Goodman,

2003, p. 6). Playing with mediums of production also develops critical thinking skills as one discovers the expressive possibilities of the medium (Eisner, 2002).

I think the points raised by current research can be applied to the creative production of posters and videotaped commercials for single classroom use, although referring to new media multimodal production in an internet-connected world.

Production of media empowers the creator as they practice having their voices heard (Leu & Zawilinski, 2007) in a participatory culture (Jenkins, et al., 2006). Jenkins defines participatory cultures as having "low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is knowledge by the most experienced is passed along to novices" (p. 3). To join the participatory culture, Sheppard (2009) explains what skills are necessary for multimedia production:

Multimedia production practices are a sophisticated integration of knowing how and when to use appropriate technologies, where to find or how to create the necessary media resources, how to interact with the people involved with a project, and how to prepare the material for the context in which it will be used by its intended audience. Each aspect of this practice is a matter of negotiation, one in which the designer must make decisions that will ultimately impact the meaning and reception of a multimedia text. (Sheppard, 2009, p. 130)

In a paper for the MacArthur Foundation, Henry Jenkins, along with four colleagues, Clinton, Purushotma, Robison, and Weigel, set out to identify the social skills needed for full involvement in today's participatory culture. The skills they identified build on traditional literacies taught in classrooms of research, technical, and critical analysis. The social skills are developed through collaboration and networking, and include play, performance, appropriation, simulation, and transmedia navigation. Play, Jenkins, et al, defined as the capacity to experiment with one's surroundings as a form of

problem-solving. Performance is the ability to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of improvisation and discovery; appropriation is the ability to meaningfully sample and remix media content; and simulation is the ability to interpret and construct dynamic models of real-world processes. The ability to follow the flow of stories and information across multiple modalities is transmedia navigation. Other skills discussed by Jenkins, et al, include: multitasking, distributed cognition, collective intelligence, judgment, networking, and negotiation.

Through making oppositional readings, or counter-narratives, in the form of speech bubbles laid atop visuals in ads, one class of fourth grade students responded to overt and hidden messages through humor, social critique and pleasure. Gainer, Valdez-Gainer and Kinard (2009), asked students to “talk back” to magazine advertisements, using the idea of oppositional readings, or counter narratives (Sefton-Green, 2006). Using dialogic instruction, including writing and classroom conversations, students were asked to talk back to advertisements using speech bubbles, an idea adapted from Bubble Project, an anti-corporate activism project. The project was socially interactive as students actively sought opinions and shared ideas for bubbles. Gainer, et al, found that critical conversations matter, and that when given opportunities to view, discuss and talk back to media texts, fourth graders are able and willing to read between the lines, taking steps towards developing critical thinking when reading media texts.

In another study, this time using an after-school club setting with middle school students, Gainer (2010) viewed documentaries with students which purported to give a true picture of urban schools. Students then created their own videos, which they agreed more accurately portrayed their school experiences. Gainer concluded that when hoping

to create more critically media literate students, teachers must make time and a space in the curriculum for all students “to debate culture through collective analysis of media and creation of alternative representations” (Gainer, 2010, p. 372).

While creating a science-based, multimedia website for children, Sheppard (2009) became more conscious of the sophisticated literacy practices used to create multimedia projects. She found that producing multimedia requires: negotiating content - balancing approaches to audience, communicative purpose and media affordances; addressing technological rhetorical considerations - balancing media type, audience needs, and contexts of use; being a multi-modal communicator - the challenges of learning to use multiple literacies in rhetorically meaningful ways. She says we need to share these skills with our students in order for them to become successful academically, professionally, and civically. She also offers a list of guidelines for instructors to follow to build on traditional, print-based practices, many of which the teacher in the present study utilized in the propaganda unit in her whole-language-based classroom:

- Recognize and embrace the messy nature of multimedia production - room / time to experiment, provide resources, tutorials and/or guest presenters, have realistic expectations for final projects.
- Provide opportunities for students to interact with and learn from intended audiences throughout development process - conduct surveys, focus groups, interviews and/or site visits, have them return to these users with draft versions of their work for feedback.
- Help students interrogate instances of conflict about the intended purpose or audience, be explicit about differences of opinion.

- Encourage students to recognize and negotiate the relationship between design technologies and capabilities and their influence of the message/effect on their intended audience - "Just because something can be done with multimedia does not necessarily mean it should be done." (p. 128)
- Discuss with students what shapes their expectations of academic and/or professional multimedia texts vs. personal or social texts - "Offering examples and analysis of multimedia texts ... can provide models for students work, as well as points of reference for helping students and teachers to have shared expectations of the kinds of texts that should be produce." p 129
- Include reflective writing assignments at every stage of production process to encourage students be more aware of their own tacit practices, have them record media and rhetorical choices they make, challenges they face, and to discuss the ways in which they negotiate these to complete their projects.

Conclusion

Several themes run through the material outlined in this chapter. First, media literacy education is necessary in our world filled with visual and verbal text, in order to empower our students to reflect on and resist the lure of exuberant advertisers. In addition, constructing knowledge about the media involves talking, reading, viewing, writing, and creating persuasive messages. This hands-on participation in learning encourages higher order thinking skills along with the development of social skills necessary in a democratic society.

The articles already mentioned, and the articles yet to be discussed, have underlying similarity and connections. The use and abuse of language is the rope that twines throughout the commercial world and necessitates a knowledgeable other to help us with reading and writing, viewing and creating, critiquing and composing, thinking and talking, our way through it.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of seventh graders during a propaganda unit to answer the question: **What are the experiences of young adults during a unit of study in which advertising media is the focus?** The following questions guided this study of students' experience throughout one unit of study:

How do instructional practices influence young adults' responses to media?

How do young adults respond to advertising media?

Method: Research Paradigm

This qualitative study focuses on a bounded system of one group of students involved in one unit of study in one school. This bounded system, plus the "how" research questions investigating a contemporary event, within its real-life context, and over which the researcher has little or no control, makes case study the preferred strategy of research (Yin, 2003). Creswell (2007) holds that the "purposeful sampling" for a case study may be an ordinary, accessible case, of which this study classroom is (p. 127). The location of the classroom was also convenient for me in terms of access into the district and having a small amount of travel time. Although a case of convenience may decrease a study's credibility, the single case in this study is also a homogenous, typical case, which case allows for greater focus and which may be chosen to highlight what is normal or average in a rural school (Creswell, 2007, referencing Miles & Huberman, 1994). Because of the ease of access to the study classroom, I was able to attend all class meetings during the propaganda unit in the classroom, and this study gains validation due

to the convenient accessibility and prolonged engagement in the field (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988).

The study is conducted within a constructivist worldview or paradigm, where meaning is believed to be socially constructed and the meaning which people attribute to an object or event is influenced by the groups they belong to (Dewey, 1910/1997; Vygostky, 1986; Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Gee, 2003).

As the researcher in the classroom, my role was both as a participant and observer. There are strengths and weaknesses to research conducted by an investigator acting as both participant and observer. Strengths of being a participant-observer include quickly achieving rapport with research subjects; having insight into interpersonal behavior; gaining access to events; covering events in real time; and covering the context of the event (Yin, 2003). Weaknesses of the participant-observer stance include the extensive time commitment which may require too much attention to events, leaving insufficient time to take notes as an external observer. Other weaknesses include possible bias due to the investigator's manipulation of events and becoming a supporter of the group; problems with reflexivity in that the event may proceed differently because it is being observed; and problems with selectivity because "familiarity breeds inattention" when insiders take for granted things which may never come to the surface (p. 47, Hatch, 2002), unless there is broad coverage (Yin, 2003).

I established rapport with the teacher and her students several ways. Having grown up on a farm and living my entire married life in a rural community, I am familiar with rural settings and topics. Having taught in the same school district, I was familiar with the study teacher, other teachers in the school building, district administrators,

schedules and routines. The study teacher and I have known each other for more than ten years, and I had substitute-taught in the study classroom and in the school building several times during the study year, which also helped me to establish a rapport with this class. This rapport proved important for the interviews I conducted as part of the data collection for the case study, since it was important that I establish a "conversational partnership" with my participants, making the students feel comfortable (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Some scholars believe the role of insider is better than outsider "because interviewees assume that the researcher is sympathetic and understands their language, concepts and experience" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 87) and adds to the "value and accuracy" of a study (p. 207, Creswell, 2007). However, others, like Hatch (2002) believe an insider may take for granted the reasoning behind interviewees' answers and not work to bring these ideas to the surface.

The study classroom teacher, Whitney Frederickson, introduced me as "Mrs. Willingham," a former sixth grade teacher at one of the neighboring schools in the district, her friend, and her colleague through our work together with the Missouri Writing Project. I shared with students that I had returned to graduate school and was in their classroom because I was interested in what the students had to say about their reading and writing experiences. As the researcher in the classroom, I was an observer and supporter of the teacher and of the students in terms of suggestions, a listening ear, and technical advice. I limited my direct involvement with teaching by leading only three discussions on the second day of class, including discussions of binary oppositions, meanings of colors, and Rank's intensify schema for deconstructing persuasive texts. Other than leading those three discussions with the students, my interaction with students

involved being supportive when they wanted to talk, giving another opinion, and encouraging them to decide for themselves.

Throughout the unit, Whitney and I discussed my impressions of the students, and she added to my understanding of interpersonal relationships in the classroom such as who was friends with whom and who had crushes on whom, and by giving insight into students' home lives and thereby, into students' reactions to class discussions. Whitney saw me as a co-teacher rather than an observer. I listened as Whitney planned lessons, serving as a conversation partner. I gave Whitney and her principal a copy of *Harvesting Minds: How TV Commercials Control Kids* (Fox, 2000) so they might be familiar with the study that prompted me to observe Whitney's seventh graders working with advertising media. Whitney read Chapter 8 "What Can We Do Right Now?" and selected several activities to include in her lesson plans for the unit, such as simulating what focus groups and advertisers do; viewing media from other countries; and predicting outcomes. A complete list of activities Whitney brought to the students during this unit is attached to this dissertation as Appendix A. Whitney asked me to teach three of several lessons on the second day of the unit, during which it seemed to me from their distractedness that the students preferred their teacher's familiar instruction to mine. Whitney also involved me in classroom discussions, during which I participated briefly and not as the only expert in the room. I actually did not participate in class discussion as often as I truly wanted. The conversations the students and their teacher had regarding commercials and print ads were tempting to join in, and at times I could not restrain myself. When I participated, I asked students why they thought they way they did, what was it about the commercial made them respond as they did, questions similar to questions Whitney asked

as well. It was difficult for me at times to silence my teacher questions. When offering comments on commercials, I would often shrug, saying, "That's just another idea" and hope students saw my comment as one made by an interested viewer rather than a teacher expert. In light of an email I received from the teacher following her review of my initial findings, it seems I achieved the blending-in-as-just-another-discussion-participant. The teacher said, "I find myself a little surprised that we really forgot you were recording everything that happened and were ourselves" (Whitney Frederickson, personal email, May 27, 2011).

When the teacher needed to leave the classroom, I supervised the class. I also accompanied groups of students when they filmed commercials outdoors and in the hallway, serving as an adult overseer, but not as their teacher. As students filmed, I answered questions, asked questions, and offered encouragement to them. Because I was not their teacher, if students needed permission to leave the classroom (to go to the restroom, to go to the office for a color print, to go to the gym for rubber balls for a "baby bump" required for a birth control commercial), Whitney was the one to grant that permission, not me. Whitney was also the one to handle any discipline issues, of which there were few, minor incidents, mostly along the line of "get back to work." At one point, I handed the Flip camcorder to a student for her to figure out how to use it, and then turned the small bit of action filmed by this student into a movie using Windows MovieMaker. I showed this short movie in class as a demonstration of what students might try with their own commercials. The students appeared comfortable with my presence in the classroom. During my last visit, the class gave me a card of thanks,

signed by all, and brought in cookies and a throne used in school plays. They then invited me back to their classroom whenever I wanted.

As a participant-observer, I had to deal with several potential biases. I tried to keep aware of possible biases while analyzing the data in order to portray the students and context in an accurate portrayal. Did I become a supporter of the class? Yes, I did. I thought the students were wonderful and could do little wrong. Familiarity with the participants, brought on by my being in the classroom throughout the four weeks of this unit and several other times throughout the school year, might have led to my being too empathetic with them, which might have led me to not follow-up as carefully as I should in the interviews, preferring to only show my interviewees in a favorable light (Rubin and Rubin, 2005; Hatch, 2002).

Did I stumble at taking notes? Yes, I did, especially when I left the room to be outdoors or in the hallway with groups who were filming. A digital recorder was on during each of these outings, and I hoped all student comments were recorded, but I did not always write observation notes, depending, probably too much so, on the recordings. I worried when I left the room to supervise small groups of students, that I was missing the action within the classroom.

I worried that the credibility of this study might be threatened by my leaving the room, by my personal feelings toward the students, and by my relationship with the teacher. However, by being aware of these biases, I feel as if I was able to recognize and guard against the biases and by doing so, guard against the loss of credibility of this study (Merriam, 1988). Also, having colleagues, including the students' teacher, fellow graduate students, and members of my doctoral committee, come up with alternative

explanations and suggestions regarding the data, and keeping an open mind to contrary findings, adds to the credibility of this study, through a triangulation among different evaluators and different perspectives of the same data set (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2003).

Throughout the data collection period, I had the chance to step out of my former fulltime teaching role and observe students in their natural setting of the classroom. As a classroom teacher dealing with discipline issues and classroom management and grading and curriculum dictates, I was not always able to notice student interactions and, if I did notice them, did not always have the time and opportunity to sit down and consider the meanings of these interactions. The insight gathered in this study will be valuable to other teachers who may also lack the time and opportunity to ponder student interactions and the contexts which help set up those interactions.

The next section describes the setting for this study. Describing the setting and participants with thick description will increase the study's credibility and transferability due to others being able to locate "shared characteristics" (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) between this and other studies.

Setting

The School. The study school is one of three kindergarten through eighth grade elementary schools in the district feeding into the one high school which graduates about 100 students each year. Total school district enrollment for study year 2009-2010 was 1,292 students with 95% of the students identifying as white Caucasian and 48% on free or reduced lunches. The elementary school where this study took place is, size-wise, the middle elementary school in the district, and had 279 total students in the study year with

98% of the students identified as white Caucasian and 47% on free or reduced lunches. The one-story brick building is located along a blacktopped road several miles from the nearest town. The building has no air-conditioning so at times teachers will open outside doors to allow better air circulation down the hallways and throughout classrooms. Open doors at ground level and surrounded by flat, grain fields, have led on occasion to an animal, such as a dog or snake, entering the building. At one point during the data collection period, I was outside with students filming a commercial when one student almost stepped on a snake coiled beside the sidewalk, five steps from the open door leading into the building. I immediately returned to the classroom with the group. The teacher shrugged, but noting my anxiety suggested closing the door. She was accustomed to this happening and had recently written a Beowulf-inspired epic to describe one battle she engaged in with a snake who had entered the building.

In the study school, there were two self-contained (one teacher teaching four core subjects of language arts, math, social studies, and science) classrooms for each grade level, K-6. All grades also had scheduled times for physical education, art and music. Junior high students also had the opportunity to participate in band class. Junior high consisted of grades 7 and 8, with seventh grade, because of having an enrollment of only eighteen students, occupying one room at a time, except for math when they split into higher and lower math classes. Junior high students moved between four adjacent rooms, one each for communication arts, math, science, and social studies. The junior high teachers also each share responsibilities in "class-within-a-class" (CWC) arrangements, which is a way to include special needs students in regular classrooms, rather than special services classrooms, while providing the extra support these students need. The extra

person in a CWC classroom is most often a paraprofessional. However, in the study school, with seventh grade enrollment totaling only eighteen students and leading to an extra planning time for the junior high teachers, the administrator chose to have the junior high teachers fill the paraprofessional role in different subject classes during their extra planning period, saving the district the money for hiring a paraprofessional.



Figure 4. Tubs and shelves line walls in Whitney's room and contain both picture books and young adult literature neatly organized by genre.

The study teacher, Whitney's classroom is located in a hallway which contains the four junior high core subject rooms (communication arts, science, social studies, and math), two sixth grade rooms, the music room, and a pair of restrooms. Student lockers line the two walls of the hallway and student work covers the space above the lockers and beside the restrooms. One sixth grade room is between Whitney's communication arts classroom and the outside door, and the math room and other sixth grade room are directly across the hall. Whitney's classroom has two wide windows. The whiteboard is

between the windows and doubles as a screen for projection. Shelves line two walls holding hundreds of books categorized by genre. About the number of books, Whitney said she tries to have books available that will appeal to every reader in her class:

Why so many books? Because everyone has different tastes and I'm hoping to hit most of them. I share them through dictation, talking about them, putting them on the board ledge, or simply holding them. Once I get one person reading a book, more will follow. It's even better when a student gets into something. We had three copies of *The Burn Journals* in the room this year and couldn't keep one on the shelves. *She Said Yes*, *13 Reasons Why*, the *Hunger Games* series...all the same. One student got hooked and soon everyone wanted them. (Whitney, personal email, May 2011)

Several round folding chairs sit beside the bookshelves, used by students during self-selected reading time and small group discussions. Six out-dated computers are in the room, with the most current computer sitting beside Whitney's teacher desk. Students sit at two-person tables arranged in a rectangle so that every student faces in. The reason for the table arrangement, Whitney says, is because "each voice is equal and deserves not only to be heard but to be seen while speaking. No talking to the back of somebody's head" (Whitney, personal email, May 2011).

Above the computer tables and bookshelves hang several murals and stage art designed for past junior high plays which Whitney directs each year. A wardrobe and tubs above it store costumes and props for those plays and for classroom activities which would require them. The portable LCD projector, which Whitney attached to her computer in order to show commercials to the seventh graders, is shared by all teachers in the school and is stored in the media center. The chalkboard in Whitney's room displays student-created name blocks and drawings. While teaching this unit, Whitney either sat

at her desk to run the computer or sat at one of the student tables. I often sat across the room from Whitney at one of the student tables.

The next section describes the participants in the study, including both the teacher and her students.

The Participants. This research study took place in a rural, Midwestern elementary school in the spring of 2010. Seventeen seventh grade students participated. In this section I will first describe the teacher who designed the unit with assistance from the me and who assisted the me in understanding the students and the data collected. After describing the teacher, I will describe the students, although a more complete description of the students will come through in their own words in the analysis chapter.

The Teacher. Whitney is a junior high communication arts teacher at a rural school. She teaches both seventh and eighth grade reading and writing, plus an enrichment class. She also supports special needs students during one CWC section of eighth grade social studies, an arrangement described above in the school setting description. Whitney has taught for twenty years, including a two-year stint in a one-room schoolhouse on an island off the coast of Maine, and five years in primary grade at an urban school district. Thirteen of her twenty teaching years have been in the school district selected for this study, with two years of early childhood special education-homebound, four years as a second-third grade combined classroom (multi-age) and seven years as junior high communication arts teacher.

I chose Whitney for a number of reasons. I chose her because we have known each other for more than ten years as teaching colleagues and as active Teacher Consultants with the local site of the National Writing Project. Whitney is always ready

to volunteer, especially with anything related to the writing project, and finds much satisfaction in her encounters with teachers and students through these activities. I chose Whitney because I know her and respect her and because her sense of humor is delightful. I chose Whitney because in our conversations over the years, I have been, and continue to be, impressed with her teacher wisdom and her commitment to teaching. Whitney, it seems to me, is a bit of a rebel within the school district, fighting to control the curriculum based on her students' needs versus having a script and curriculum timeline control her and her students. It appears to me that her approach is working since her students consistently score highest in the district and above average on the yearly state assessment in communication arts.

During a state language arts conference held in early spring 2010, Whitney attended a media literacy session I co-facilitated. During that presentation, we practiced using a schema of intensify / downplay techniques designed by Hugh Rank (1974/1976) to deconstruct, or analyze, persuasive messages. This is an activity I used previously with college undergraduate education students. Whitney told me after the workshop that she thought she would use the schema to teach a unit on the propaganda techniques in her seventh grade class, an expectation listed by the state department of education as being part of the seventh grade communication arts curriculum. While talking with her after the media literacy workshop session, I began to wonder how her idea of bringing commercials and print ads into her seventh grade propaganda unit might look and what lessons from a study of her classroom I could share with undergraduate education students. When I shared my wonderings with Whitney, she invited me to join her class and observe during the unit.

In the past I have attended workshops Whitney presented at the state language arts conference, and I have watched her work with other teachers through writing project professional development opportunities. Her teacher audience seems to always appreciate her presentation style and the information she provides. I thought to be in her classroom throughout a unit of study would be not only informative, but pleasurable as well.

The Students. While a more detailed description of the student participants will be shown through their own words in the analysis section of this dissertation, I will briefly describe the students here. The student participants are seventh grade students in a rural Midwest elementary school which includes grades kindergarten through eighth. The study was conducted during the seventh grade communication arts class meeting time during a propaganda unit planned by their teacher with input from the researcher. In the study school, there was only the one seventh grade class due to a low enrollment. There were eighteen students in the entire seventh grade class, four males and fourteen females. Seventeen of the students are white and one male is of mixed race. This homogenous group is appropriate for studying small subgroups in depth (Hatch 2007). This is a group of rural students whose conversations and journal writings often centered around rural topics. One student's journal contained entries about attending rodeos and practicing barrel-racing, while another student wrote about her latest bottle-fed calf which she named M&M. During one class activity when considering what different colors reminded them of, one girl wrote that the color green reminded her of alfalfa hay. For another group, the color orange meant caution like the hunter orange clothing they wear when hunting during deer season.

After receiving approval for the study, I met with the students prior to the start of the study to inform them about my plans and to invite them to participate. I provided parent / guardian consent forms and youth assent forms to the students and asked the forms be returned whether or not they decided to participate in the study. While I hoped all seventeen students would participate, the parents of one student declined permission for that student to participate. See Appendices B and C for the consent and assent forms I used.

I explained to the student that my duties as the researcher were to invite participation in the study; explain the research procedure; obtain signed consent forms from the participants; attend, observe and take notes on all class meetings during the media literacy unit; assist in planning lessons and co-teach with the students' teacher at the teacher's request; and interview participants in small groups and/or individually.

Since this study followed the students through a regularly scheduled unit of study in their classroom, all students were required to complete all activities. Those students who agreed to be participants in the study were also asked to meet with the researcher in small groups or individual interview sessions held during school hours, and answer interview questions. The benefits for the participants included the provision of a safe environment in which the participants could talk about how they felt in a class incorporating the analysis and production of media. Participants might also enjoy the opportunity to explore their learning experience in a thoughtful, critical way, and better understand how they think and how they engage with media. I also let students know that the final results of the study would be available upon the participants' and/or their guardians' request.

Data collection

I chose a case study research method because I believed my research questions were answerable through a variety of data including individual and group interviews, recorded group conversations, student writings and projects, and through observations and notes taken during classroom discussions. Having multiple types of data enhance the quality of a case study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell 2007).

I collected data at the elementary school which the students attend during the time the research study students were in communication arts class time. Table 1 shows the number of days and amount of hours I was present with students during their communication arts class time. I was in the study classroom for 17 days and a total of about 31 hours. Classes were longer the first week of the unit because the four junior high teachers adjusted the schedule to accommodate longer blocks of time for the eighth graders taking the state assessment. At the conclusion of the seventeen-day, four-week unit, I was at the school four additional days for interviews and journal scanning. In addition, since Whitney's class time for the seventh graders ended at lunch break, I often stayed to eat and visit with the junior high teachers in the teachers' lounge.

Table 2. Number of days and hours researcher in study classroom

Week	Total number of days	Total amount of time
1	3 (short week before Easter holiday)	9 hours
2	4 (short week following Easter holiday)	9 hours
3	5 days	7 hours
4	5 days	6 hours
Total	17 days	31 hours

All scheduled times the students worked on their media projects during the school day, I was present. I did not lunch with the students or follow them to their other

classrooms, though, so I was not present for any discussion of the media projects taking place during those times, nor were these discussions, if any, recorded. I also was not present for any work completed by students at home, including work on the videos done on home computers. Members of two groups, Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches and ScarAway, revised the final commercials on home computers, the two group members being absent from workshop two days when they attended gifted class elsewhere in the school district. Even though I was as persistent as I could be, there were times when I left the room to be outdoors or in the hallway with groups who were filming. While I had a digital recorder recording each of these filming ventures, I did not write many observation notes during the filming, due to being engrossed in the fun the students were having as they filmed. I hoped all student comments were recorded. I worried, too, when I left the room to observe small groups of students as they filmed or completed other work on their final projects, that I was missing the action within the classroom. Even though I was not present in the classroom, each group had an MP3 player recording their conversations.

Because I was not sure how my research questions might evolve during and after the data collection period, I gathered and recorded everything I could from the students, their teacher, and the classroom. I scanned journal writings and collected posters made by the students. Each commercial shown by the teacher, she saved the URL addresses to a list (see Appendix E), and I converted and downloaded those commercials which I could. I recorded class discussion using my Pulse recording pen and its coordinating notebook which was also my observation notebook. I recorded small group meetings using my digital recorder and five MP3 players owned by the school. I saved film

"takes" of the final project commercials which the students filmed using a Flip video camcorder, saving these and final project commercials to CDs. I conducted a focused interview of each final project group which I videotaped and audio-recorded. I saved email written between the teacher and me. Table 3 shows each type and amount of data collected during this study.

Table 3. Types and amounts of data collected

Type of Data	Amount of Data
Student journals	181 pages
Posters (public service announcements and five questions)	12
Film takes	118 (see table below for per group data)
Interviews	5
Pulse pen whole class recordings	30 hours
Small group recordings	34.5 hours
Reflections/Self-evaluations	34 (17 of each)
Focus group forms	51 (3 focus groups held)
Emails from teacher	
Observation/Researcher journal	
Photographs	

The teacher consulted the state education department's grade level expectations on propaganda techniques to teach at the seventh grade level and planned lessons to cover those expectations. She asked my input but the decisions were hers. Table 4 shows a timeline for the unit. During the first few days of the unit, much class time as lecture and discussion. After Whitney introduced the final project assignment on 4/8, class time became a production workshop, similar to reading and writing workshops Whitney used throughout the year. A typical day in the production workshop began with a mini-lesson, and then the majority of the remaining time was work time for groups. In a workshop atmosphere, the teacher provides a dedicated time in which to read, write, or, in Whitney's case, for her students to produce commercials and print ads. The

responsibility, for setting goals and completing work, lay with the students. As I observed what students did during the production workshop, a time I referred to as student-managed time, I compared these activities to the work done during the non-workshop time, or teacher-managed time. My observations are listed below in Table 5. A complete listing of the activities Whitney used during the unit is attached as Appendix A.

Table 4 Timeline of lessons and activities for unit

Date	Lesson/Activity
3/30	Fluent-writing (FW) - Think about commercials, where you see them, what is it about them that you like, drives you crazy ...; sharing of FW; first-response writing; changing values over the years
3/31	FW - What do you remember about yesterday?; sharing; binary opposites JW; stop & predict; Rank intensify JW; 5 questions; colors have meaning JW; apply these ideas to print ad, poster, gallery walk
4/1	FW - Watch commercial and respond; sharing; Rank downplay; zeroing in on what's missing; banned commercials, why banned?
Easter break 4/2-5	
4/6	Class discussion of gossip problem in junior high at the moment; public service announcement group work; presentations
4/7	Silent reading after testing all morning; handout "How to Analyze Ads" with discussion; FW - take one ad just watched and look through the handout to help analyze the ad.
4/8	FW - Continue what you wrote about yesterday, re-read and add on, sharing; final project introduction, show parody examples; work time
4/9	FW - group plans/goals for the day, sharing; work time
4/12	FW - (explained background to song) Listen to song "Propaganda Leaves You Blinded", can write to song or not, sharing; work time
4/13	More parody examples including logo parodies (OOPS for UPS; FedUp for FedEx); work time
4/14	Watch PBS "Merchants of Cool"; focus group for Pepsi products
4/15	Watch beginning of video "Logorama", think about logo for your product; work time
4/16	Focus group for projects in process
4/19	FW - Think about what you need to finish with projects, sharing; work time
4/20	work time
4/21	work time
4/22	work time
4/23	Presentation of final projects, final focus group comments

Table 5 Activities completed during teacher-managed time and student-managed time throughout the unit.

Teacher-Managed Time	Student-Managed Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewed commercials and print ads • Viewed parody examples • Listened to teacher lecture • Read aloud from worksheets • Participated in group activities, talking and completing tasks • Participated in class discussion • Fluent-wrote • Shared fluent-writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talked with group members, on- and off-task • Talked with young adults not in group, on- and off-task • Talked with teacher, on- and off-task • Moved around the room • Sat in groups (and wandered to other groups) • Conducted internet research – on-task and off-task work (blonde jokes) • Played – seemingly off-task, but at times led to brainstorming and revisions to commercial script • Wrote scripts (individually and with group members), handwritten or on computer word processing program • Wrote songs for commercials (usually with group members) • Collected and created props, and enlisted actors in preparation of filming • Practiced scripts • Filmed their commercials • Revised commercials while filming • Edited filmed commercials, combining takes using movie-making application on computer (at least two students continued the editing on their home computers) • Spontaneously sang songs, either heard before (jingles, popular songs) or nonsense songs composed on the spot • Flirted • Argued • Laughed • Nothing (apparently)

Lesson topics included a variety of media literacy topics and numerous commercial examples:

- Fluent-writing began most days' activities. Whitney offered a prompt several days with "What commercials have you seen, that you like or don't like, that you can't get out of your head? Write about them" as the first day's prompt. Another day's prompt was "Watch this commercial and then write your reaction to it." After students wrote to the prompt, Whitney invited them to write on whatever topic they chose. During the production workshop, the prompts were usually a moment to write down the group's goals for the day, followed by a "status of the class" type sharing (Atwell, 1998) before being released to workshop time.
- First-response writing had the students viewing commercials and writing their first responses in their journal before discussing each commercial as a class.



Figure 5. This "possessed" baby doll used in a video game console commercial had most students writing a first response of "creepy." One student, though, wrote it was her kind of commercial and watched it several more times once she got home from school that day (advertisingindustrynewswire.com)

- In stop-and-predict exercises, Whitney stopped commercials at strategic points (decided by her beforehand) and asked students to predict the product being advertised using what they knew about plot, author's purpose, and character development. She used foreign commercials for this activity so that students would not be able to rely on hearing the words to know the product. This forced students to

rely more on the visual, such as facial expressions and nonverbal actions, and on their understanding of storyline.

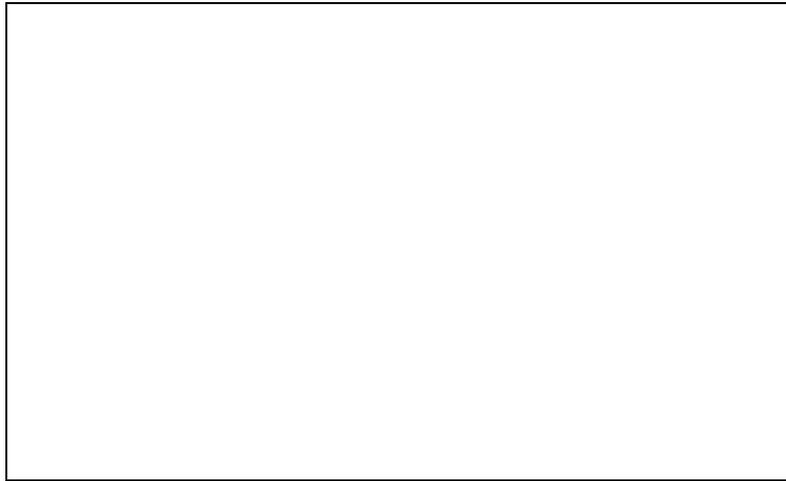


Figure 6. This foreign commercial is advertising social media. The "subway mimics" was one commercial Whitney used during the stop-and-predict activity.
(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHUcJWpmGbo>)

- Teacher and students read, discussed, and applied Rank's (1974/1976) intensify / downplay schema for deconstructing media (see Appendix D) as well as the Center for Media Literacy's five key questions for deconstruction: 1) Who created this message? 2) What creative techniques are used to attract my attention? 3) How might different people understand this message differently? 4) What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message? 5) Why is this message being sent? Whitney handed a pile of print ads to groups of students, asked them to select one advertisement, and to apply the five questions and intensify techniques to the ad. Groups taped these ads to the middle of a large piece of paper and wrote their answers around the ad. Groups then went on a "gallery walk," walking around to each group's poster to read others' responses, returning to their own posters for a wrap-up, full-class discussion.

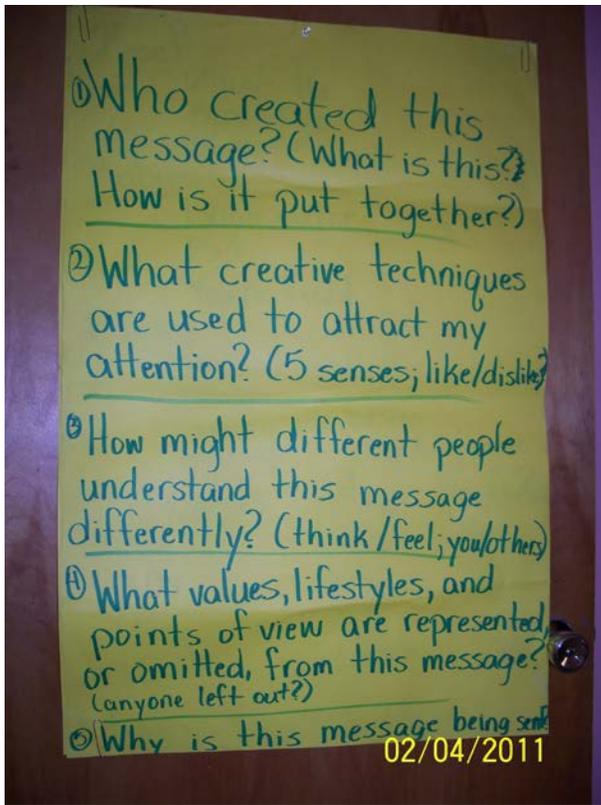


Figure 7. Five questions to ask ads, per the Center for Media Literacy.



Figure 8. One group's poster deconstructing a Perry Ellis ad using CML's five questions and Rank's schema

- A public service announcement poster was a project that Whitney asked students to do in response to gossip being spread throughout junior high at the time. (As

Whitney was explaining the poster project, one student said, "Oh, it's like those 'Pass it on' and 'The More You Know' ads on tv!") The posters gave students practice in applying persuasive techniques to create a visual ad before the final project was assigned.

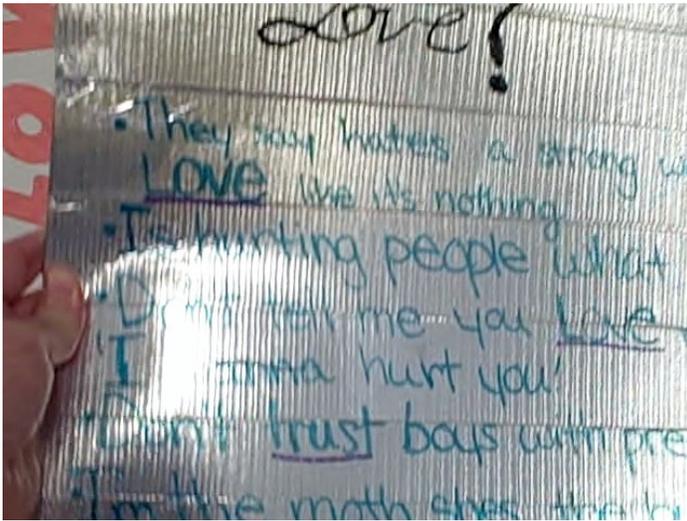


Figure 9. Using attention-getting silver duct tape and offering advice for the love-lorn are ways this group decided to send their public service message.

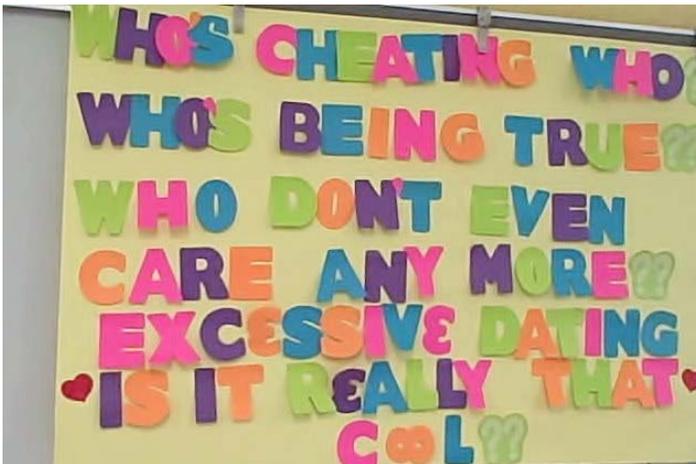


Figure 10. This group chose lyrics to a song and large bright letters to send their message in their public service announcement poster.

- Focus group presentations allowed groups to present their ideas to the class for peer suggestions and comments, as a way to get revision ideas for their final projects.

	• Group #1	• Group #2	• Group #3
• Parody	•	•	•
• Print	•	•	•
• Filmed Commercial	•	•	•
• Do you think you'd buy this product if you could?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7-extremely likely • 6-pretty likely • 5-likely • 4-undecided • 3-unlikely • 2-pretty unlikely • 1-extremely unlikely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7-extremely likely • 6-pretty likely • 5-likely • 4-undecided • 3-unlikely • 2-pretty unlikely • 1-extremely unlikely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7-extremely likely • 6-pretty likely • 5-likely • 4-undecided • 3-unlikely • 2-pretty unlikely • 1-extremely unlikely

Figure 11. Sample focus group form.

- The final project was for groups to collaborate in the creation of their own products for which they created three advertisements, including a print ad and a filmed commercial, at least one of which needed to be a parody.

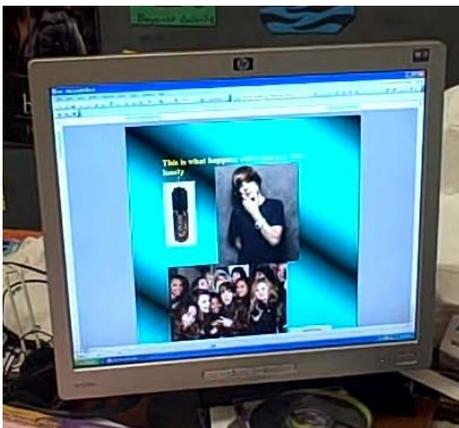


Figure 12. Bieberlicious print ad describes how to go from being alone in the top photo to being surrounded by girls in the bottom photo.

Whitney searched online, selected, and downloaded commercials to her classroom computer for students to view during class time, choosing commercials based on theme (e.g., anti-smoking), student interest (e.g., video game consoles, sports, babies), and

lesson topic (e.g., changing values over the years). Although the school district's computer server blocks YouTube for student use, Whitney was able to use her teacher code to access the YouTube website to locate commercials to share with students. She gave me a list of the URL addresses of the commercials shown during the unit, and her list is attached to this dissertation as Appendix E. Whitney chose sixty television commercials through YouTube for students to watch. She also chose eight additional commercial parodies, both from YouTube and from those commercials made by her students during the previous year. In addition, two videos she chose for students to watch were the first two sections of the "Merchants of Cool" PBS movie, in order to give students an example of how a focus group runs; and the beginning 1:13 min. of *Logorama*, an animated short film filled with logos for a variety of items from the Michelin Tire man and the mustached Pringles character to Red Roof Inns and NASA. The students enjoyed identifying the logos on the short film, but due to inappropriate-for-school language, Whitney was unable to show more than the opening scene. After viewing *Logorama*, Whitney invited students to design a logo for their product, if they had not done so already.



Figure 13. A still shot from award-winning short film, Logorama, produced by A. de Minuit, created by French animation collective H5, Francois Alaux, Herve de Crecy and Ludovic Houplain, and presented at the Cannes Film Festival 2009.
(Photo obtained from latimesblogs.latimes.com)

Students wrote in their journals during fluent-writing time. I scanned a total of 181 student journal pages ranging from Bethany's densely-packed five pages with several dated entries per page, up to 18 pages from students who used a page per entry and sometimes several pages per day. In addition to fluent-writing to prompts, both teacher-guided and student-chosen, the students' journals contained notes written during whole class activities (first reactions to commercials, stop-and-predict), notes to each other, drafts of scripts, doodles, and drawings of print ads. Other student writing during this unit included comments on the focus group forms for three focus group activities, and completion of an individual reflection and evaluation of the final group project. These three forms are part of the list of unit activities in Appendix A.

While Whitney and I had discussed how we wanted these students to have their hands on as much of the equipment during this unit as we could turn over to them, I found that putting students in control of *all* equipment led to problems, especially with the recorders. My initial research plan was to have every group work session recorded,

using a tape cassette recorder I owned, my digital recorder, and four MP3 recorder/players borrowed from the subject school's media center. I estimated I would have from 50-60 hours of group recordings by the end of the unit, since the production workshop ran for ten days in the classroom. The tape cassette player failed the first day, and I replaced it with a fifth MP3 recorder/player from the school. I handed each group either my digital recorder or an MP3 recorder/player at the beginning of each work session, assuming the students knew how to work them. That assumption was a mistake. After little recording happened the first two days, I assumed due to operator error, I personally made sure each recorder was turned on. Sometimes helpful students turned off the recorders, but they neglected to push "save" before pushing "off," a bit of conversation was lost in those instances. I told these helpful students, "I thank you" but I would take care of turning the MP3 recorders off. Along the way, I discovered that students paused and turned off the recorders when they wanted to talk without guarding their language, something I had not considered until one day Desirae asked me how to pause the recorder, having seen others pausing theirs. One group also told me "no thank you" one day as I held out a recorder to them, a refusal which was their choice as part of their participation and signing the assent form. Although I encouraged participation, I could not force students to participate by having their conversations recorded. As a result of these issues, I ended up with about thirty hours of student group recording instead of the 50-60 I had originally estimated. The amounts of recorded conversation from each group ranged from 252 minutes for the Bieberlicious group down to 38 minutes for the Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches. While I did not obtain the hours of recording for each group that I originally estimated, the groups often sat close enough so that two or

more groups' conversations could be heard on one recording. So while I had only 38 minutes for the Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches group, I could sometimes listen to their conversations (and their "did you just turn that off?") on their neighbors' recorders. Although I was disappointed to not have recordings of all of the conversations going on during the final group project work sessions, it was truly up to the students whether they wished to participate in the research study. If they felt they did not want their conversations recorded, they had every right under their assent forms to turn off the recorders. I gleaned as much information as I could from the recorded sessions and hoped to have gathered enough information for reasonable findings in this study.

In addition to the various small recorders in the room, I recorded and wrote notes using my Pulse pen in a special recording notebook which also served as my observation journal. I recorded almost 30 hours of class time on it, which is almost as much time as I spent in the classroom, as noted in Table 2. While my Pulse pen was on most of the time, it was off a small bit of time at the beginning of the unit during administrative/-beginning-of-the-school-day activities. Soon into my time in the classroom, I decided I wanted to record as much as possible during all times in the classroom, so I kept the recording pen on more after that. I turned my Pulse pen off when the teacher specifically asked to talk off-record. I recorded a bit of my conversations with Whitney, and afterwards, I regretted I had not recorded more. The reflections of a practicing teacher are important to read and hear because they are filled with information on planning and thinking, insights which can be useful for beginning teachers as well as practicing teachers. Too, the dialogue between two teachers, Whitney and me, would have been

great data to obtain and consider regarding the importance of colleague talk supporting reflective thinking.

Groups were in charge of filming each other's commercials. Table 6 below shows the number of film takes of each group's commercials as well as the time range of those takes. Sometimes the groups decided to delete false starts, but not always. Takes on the table less than five seconds in length were most often false starts, and any images filmed in these false starts were not used in the final commercial. As noted in the table,

Table 6. Number of commercial film takes per product/final project group

Product	Number of filmed commercials	Number of film takes	Time range of film takes
Pretty-On	1	3	:02-3:36
Arg-Off	1	5	:02-:36
ScarAway	2	18	:01-:45
Bieberlicious	2	26	:05-1:19
Adrenolaid	2	32	:02-:38
Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches	2	34	:03-1:13

some groups needed many takes to complete their commercials to their satisfaction.

However, the Arg-Off group had only five takes with one of those being a false start. I think this group needed less takes because the group practiced their commercial many times in the classroom, revising during their rehearsals, so that when they were ready to film it outside, the filming went smoothly. With each group, at the end of each film take, the group gathered around the digital video recorder to watch the scene, decide whether the filming was satisfactory, and, if it was not, discuss what portions needed revision (different actions, camera-person to film from a different angle), and film again. The Arg-Off group was satisfied after the fourth film take. Other groups, though, took film take after film take before running out of time or simply giving up. The Pretty-On group

was an exception with their number of takes, having only one full run-through of their commercial: the first take was a false start; the second take was the "before Pretty-On" section; and the last take was the "after Pretty-On" results section. This group simply ran out of time, spending much time on their filming day to set up the stage background of sheets hanging from the ceiling in the hallway, a background which had to be removed before class time ended. Also, absences in this group made it difficult to rehearse and limited filming dates. Their final commercial was fine, though, even though the actors held and read from their scripts.

Table 7. Final project groups and products

* This group not interviewed as it contains a study non-participant.

Product	Group members	Product description
Adrenolaid	Michael Scott	A drink which gives a person strength and courage
Arg-Off	Bailee Iris Mary	A drink which changes an angry temperament to a happy one
Bieberlicious	Bethany Tessa Amy Kenzie Deidra	A body spray for men named after celebrity Justin Bieber
Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches	Catherine Kelsey Kara	Adhesive birth control patches
Pretty-On*	Desirae Tamara (student not in study)	A roll-on formula which improves facial features
ScarAway (already a retail product, but teacher and researcher not aware of this)	Cheyenne Jonah	A roll-on medicine which makes scars disappear

I interviewed five of the six final project groups, since one group contained a study non-participant. There were six groups, ranging in size from two to five members. Because one group contained the student whose parent declined permission for him to participate, there were only five groups to interview regarding final projects. Members of the final project groups and their products are listed in Table 7. Interviews are essential sources of case study information (Yin, 2003; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). I conducted the

interviews after all groups had worked ten days on their projects and after final project presentations were made to the class. Students also completed the reflection and evaluation forms before the interviews with the following questions:

<p style="text-align: center;">Final Project Reflection</p> <p>Reflect on the advertisements you and your group created. Answer the following questions:</p> <p>What did you do best with this project?</p> <p>If you had more time, what would you change or do differently?</p> <p>Remember the tricks and techniques of propaganda used in ads (especially the arrow handout in your notebook), including:</p> <p>Opposites Intensifying: repetition, association, composition Downplaying: omission, diversion, confusion</p> <p>How did you use these tricks in your ads? (Note: You may not have used all of the tricks, but each ad used some tricks.)</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Evaluation for Propaganda / Media Literacy Unit</p> <p>List the work you did towards completing your group's advertisements:</p> <p>Grade you deserve for the advertisement projects: _____</p> <p>In your opinion, what grade should each member of your group receive, based on the amount of work each member contributed?</p>
--

It was my hope that completing these forms right before the interviews helped students to focus their recall of the production of the commercials and print ads for the final project. The interviews lasted approximately twenty minutes. I used open-ended questions to guide students' recall of how they created their media projects. Questions are attached to this dissertation as Appendix G. In addition to the reflection and evaluation forms completed beforehand, I also typed up a list of all peer comments made on the final focus group forms. A sample of this collection of comments is attached as Appendix H. I handed the typed sheet to the groups midway through the interviews, hoping the comments would prompt the groups to further recall their production process. I invited

them to reply to their classmates' responses and ideas for revision. The final projects were shared with the class on a Friday, and the interviews were conducted the following week instead of a day or two afterwards, but I hoped the ten days of working on the projects together in the production workshop along with their classmate comments as a prompt would still provide me with credible data into the students' thinking processes.

I conducted a second small group interview at the end of the unit. I wondered what skills students gained regarding advertising media. I presented each of five small groups of students with a print ad they had not seen before. To form the groups, I first separated the boys, then placed groups of students together who had similar comments and responses throughout the unit or whose personalities were similar. For instance, I put the quiet girls together: Deidra, Mary, and Kara. I put the energetic, boisterous personalities together in a group of Amy, Michael, Iris, and Tessa, and made a group of those students I considered outside-the-box thinkers of Scott, Kelsey, Bethany, and Tamara. With Jonah, I put two students who did not seem to mind his continuous talking, Kenzie and Bailee. The last group consisted of the three girls who attended gifted education classes: Catherine, Cheyenne, and Desirae. The first group, my outside-the-box thinkers, chose the SunChips ad from a collection I tore from magazines.



Figure 19. Magazine ad for SunChips used in second group interview of seventh graders. Retrieved from *Vanity Fair*, April 2010.

I used the same ad with the other groups in order to make comparison of responses easier. I asked them to evaluate the ad based on what the class had discussed during the unit. I then posed the question, "If your teacher asks you to give advice to other students about how to read advertisements, what would you tell the students about the things that happen in your mind when you read an ad or watch a commercial?" Then I transcribed the interviews, coded the responses, and analyzed my findings.

Also during the unit, I tried to use think-alouds. While students were working in their groups, I stopped to briefly inquire of the composing processes involved in the creation of their multimedia projects. I prompted students individually or in groups to

think aloud about their thinking processes. I hoped the thinking aloud moments would allow me to hear student thinking. Students were often not able to respond to my requests for accounts of their thinking, responding most often with, "I don't know." It is difficult for young adults to articulate their thinking, as they are still developing language skills and moving away from being egocentric. Too, being put-on-the-spot by my question, in front of their peers, no less, was not conducive to thinking about anything more than how to remove themselves from the situation. Think-alouds ask participants to become aware of "mental events which normally proceed without attention ... but what they can be made aware of with little trouble" (Perkins, 1981, p 38-40). In addition, thinking about their thinking leads to development of metacognition which is valuable because a person cannot improve anything - whether it's swimming, playing basketball, reading, or thinking -- until they become aware of what they are doing (Feathers, 2004; Salvatori & Donahue, 2005; and others). While think-alouds did not yield much information in this case, they are still a technique I would like to continue to try with young adults.

The parents of one student in the class did not give consent for their student to participate in the research study. Because I collected data for this research during regular class time, and the activities were part of the regular class activities, the student was required by the teacher to participate and complete all class activities. The non-participant student was present for most class meetings and was involved in the construction of commercials and advertisements. In addition his voice was recorded during whole class discussion and small group work. However, I took special care when transcribing class discussions and small group discussions to avoid using any comments

made by this student. Even though this student made few comments, I made sure to exclude from the research data any comments that he made which were followed up by another student, or any conversations where this student's comment would need to be included to provide context for other students' comments. The non-participant student also had a role in one filmed commercial, and while I refer to that commercial at times, no references of made to this individual student, and he was not part of the data in this study.

In the next section, I will discuss recursive cycle I used while analyzing the data I collected.

Data analysis

My data analysis procedure was based on techniques used in grounded theory. Grounded theory is characterized by systematic, rigorous data collection and analysis procedures in which the researcher reads and rereads data, forming possible explanations, constantly comparing new data to these explanations to see if potential theories are grounded in the data (Hatch, 2002; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). My goal in this study was to understand what goes on as students read and write when advertising media is a focus in their classroom. I wanted to look at their conversations and writings to determine how they thought while reading and producing advertisements. Through identifying the concepts I noted in the classroom, I hoped to add to the professional body of knowledge in media literacy especially from the teacher implementation standpoint. To that end, I wanted to describe the general actions and thinking I saw the seventh grade students engage in. While this may not be the goal of most grounded theory research projects,

case analysis and generating concepts to add to the professional body of knowledge are still "valid reasons for doing research" (p. ix, Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

In qualitative research with open research questions such as mine, a recursive cycle of data collection and analysis is called for (Hatch, 2002). A recursive cycle is what I found myself involved in naturally. While I used a plan Hatch suggested for possible use in qualitative research analysis, I found myself not following it in a linear fashion. When a different idea fired while I was working with one idea, I was off to another place in the plan, or back-stepping, re-doing steps. This was the recursive nature of the analysis process for me, returning repeatedly to previous steps and skipping forward to later steps with new ideas, generating new ideas.

Even though my mind wandered often with this data, I found it very helpful to have set out a tentative plan for analysis in my research proposal. I used Hatch's (2002) steps as a way into the data I had collected:

- A. identify topic areas to be analyzed (e.g., talk, thinking, reading response)
- B. read the data, marking entries related to topics
- C. read entries by topic, recording main ideas in entries on a summary sheet
- D. look for patterns, categories, relationships within each topic area
- E. read data, coding entries according to patterns identified (keeping a record of what entries go with what elements in my patterns) - code with my own categories first, then look to others for possible pattern codes (Note: Here I had originally listed Odell, Moffett, Barnes, Hayakawa and Fox as possible researchers to consult because as Hatch explains, "It is much easier to alter or reject theoretical orientations than to create them" (p. 40, Hatch, 2002))

- F. search for non-examples of my patterns; decide if my patterns are supported by the data
- G. look for relationships among the patterns identified
- H. write patterns as one-sentence generalizations
- I. select data excerpts to support my generalizations
- J. at this point I may re-code using outside sources (see E above) and then repeat steps F-I

According to grounded theory analysis techniques, I read and reread, listened and re-listened, looked and looked again, at all the data I had collected. I noted patterns I saw in student dialogue and writing. I compared student to student, writing to writing, commercial to commercial to see if the patterns repeated. I played with the data. I wrote memos and drew diagrams. I talked with my advisor, my colleagues, the students' teacher. I questioned, I wondered, and found myself wandering too far from my initial task. My advisor said, "Make a poster of your questions. Hang it on the wall where you can see it as you work." I made the poster and returned often to it in order to re-focus my thinking as my mind wandered, distracted by noticings that I then traveled through text after text to confirm. This led to more texts, more wanderings. My advisor said, "A window. It's a window you need, not the entire landscape." This new visual seemed to work for me, a screened window, where the most pertinent ideas in my study remained while other ideas - although worthwhile, just too small for now (note them for possible inclusion in Chapter Five) - slipped through the screen. It seemed that with this new visual, I was finally able to "see" what I had looked at for so long.

When I look back on my process, I see how incredibly messy analyzing data can be with all the different lenses one can use to look at the data and all the different interpretations which can be gleaned from the same data. My process was not linear, and so, the story here of my analysis of the data will not be linear or chronological or seem to have any order to it at all or even to represent a complete description of my messy progress. Be prepared.

I began my process by organizing my data into piles: first per activity; and second per student. In the end, I sorted data per student - journal pages, focus group forms, final project reflection and evaluation - and then I took the piles of student work and clipped together students in final project groups, placing the group interview on top of the pile along with a typed sheet of peer comments on their final projects and notes I had taken on work session recordings. This was a way for me to organize what had become a mess of papers.

Along my analysis journey, I wrote memos of findings to record my thinking and ideas (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Corbin and Strauss believe memos and diagrams, another tool I used during analysis, are more than simply places to organize data. Instead, memos and diagrams "stimulate and document the analytic thought process and provide direction for theoretical sampling" (p. 140). Zinsser (1988) believes, too, that writing is "thinking on paper" (p. 11). Zinsser goes on to explain why writing is important when learning new things:

Writing organizes and clarifies our thoughts. Writing is how we think our way into a subject and make it our own. Writing enables us to find out what we know -- and what we don't know -- about whatever we're trying to learn (p. 16)

Writing memos throughout the analysis process helped me think through the data. In the memos, I asked questions including, "So what? What's the so what here?" and "Is there support in the data for what I think?" I also made comparisons between different students' responses, and between different responses of a single student. I threw out ideas and sometimes later retrieved them because something about those disposed ideas nagged at me. I will share two examples of the tossing/retrieving I did. I threw out students' personal topic writing that split their writing to the teacher's prompt, thinking I had no use for these seemingly off-task writings. But I later retrieved the entries when thinking about one purpose of free-writing being to get garbage out of the brain in order to return to the original subject with more and different ideas (Elbow, 1998). This digression in student writing became one of my findings in Chapter Four. A second idea I threw out and later retrieved was my noticing of the students singing. These seventh graders would break out in song while working during this unit. I had expected commercial jingles to be sung as watching commercials stimulates recognition of the oft-repeated attention-getting songs. I also was not totally surprised with the singing of popular songs, especially as groups changed lyrics in them to include in their commercials. But the nursery songs and Sunday school songs and nonsense songs the students were singing surprised me, and thinking this singing had no bearing on the study at hand, I tossed out the singing idea. The idea nagged for weeks, until finally I looked again at the data, looked to what researchers have to say about the connection between writing and music, and decided to include this as one of my findings. In memos I also brainstormed in order to stimulate my thinking process and direct my inquiry suggesting other data and other research to be consulted. I tried to keep an "attitude of skepticism" regarding

explanations and categories I thought I saw in the data (p. 45, Strauss & Corbin, 1990), especially when considering the biases often developed by a researcher being a participant-observer in the study (Yin, 2003). Several of my memos are included in the following discussions.

One of the first things I did with the data was to transcribe the interviews. I read the interviews through entirely without marking at first in order to relive the experience and listen to the participants' stories (Corbin & Strauss 2008). I re-read each interview on different days with a fresh mind, always marking what I noticed in each. A sample of my marking on an interview is attached as Appendix I. I asked two colleagues to read, mark, and code the interviews in their own ways, and then talked with them regarding their reading. The study teacher, Whitney, and I listened to and discussed our impressions of two interviews. To find patterns, I charted my noticings from the interviews to see what topics reached through all interviews.

I also listened and re-listened to the recordings of the small group work sessions. I took notes, starred places in my notes of conversations I wanted to return to and transcribe. I transcribed those pieces I had starred, read them, coded them, matched them to the patterns I saw in the interviews and vice versa.

Most of the information from the interviews and small group recordings regarded the production of media. In order to look at student thinking while "reading" or viewing advertising media, I turned to the class discussions recorded on my Pulse pen and to the students' journals. The Pulse pen allowed me to easily access and listen to discussions by simply tapping any spot in my notes on the recording notebook's page. Like the work session recordings, I listened, and then listened again, making notes of sections I wanted

to transcribe. I also listened to audio from the recording pen stored on my computer. The Pulse pen proved an excellent tool to use while collecting data in the classroom. With the students' journals, I read all the journal entries several times, starring all passages relating to commercials and print ads. Because the students' handwriting often distracted me (as did their spelling at times), I typed the starred passages from their journals. The translated, typed sheets of all the writing in their journals which pertained to commercials and print ads, allowed me to look more closely at each student's thinking without being distracted by spelling errors and poor handwriting. But I also returned to the scanned copies of the student journals when the idea of digression to personal topics being a "good thing" came up. I was glad at this point to have scanned all entries made during the dates of the unit, rather than only unit-related journal entries. Because I typed the students' journal entries into my computer, I was able to more easily manipulate their writings. While looking at the gathered journal entries, for several students I wrote short memos to a question I had, "What does _____'s writing show me about how she/he thinks about commercials and print ads?" About Kelsey's writing, I wrote this memo:

She questions, wonders, uses sarcasm, conversational tone, thinks it is smart to use famous people to get people to buy a product, supports her abstract comments of cute and gross with details within questions she poses, returns to the topic after writing in-between, saying "I just thought of something"
(researcher memo, 1/24)

And, of Jonah's journal entries, I wrote this:

He doesn't always use I, uses second person you; describes commercials in abstract terms but with detail support for 2 of the 11; uses "I thought" and "I think"; uses "but" to support a differing opinion
(researcher memo, 1/24)

Writing these short memos allowed me to practice focusing on similar ideas in all of the students' written entries. Later, I took these two students' writings and, once again, manipulated them, enlarging the font, cutting the comments apart, and moving them around in various arrays. I looked for shared categories between the two students, and what follows is a portion of a memo I wrote:

I took Jonah's comments, enlarged them, cut them apart, grouped them. Phrases I cut apart include: "funny" from "and really weird"; "funny" from "and at the same time weird"; and "still weird music" from "but awesome tricks" (these two ended up in the same group, selecting). The groups I made and titles I gave the groups:

dissonance - something doesn't add up:

weird, messed up
and really weird *
don't know
I thought the commercial was weird
and at the same time weird *

selecting / looking at parts of the whole

some type of thing with a car
still weird music *
weird music
bus awesome tricks *

emotional reactions ??

funny *
funny *
so hilarious
creepy!
I thought it was so cool

Only the dissonance and emotional reactions category titles occurred, I felt, in both students' comments. While looking at Jonah's comments that I'd listed under "emotional reactions", I started to wonder if these are all quick emotional reactions, or whether it is the presence of incongruities in the commercials that make certain commercials funny or creepy? Or, is it seeing relationships / comparisons being considered that cause the "funny"

reaction to a commercial. I think there needs to be a personal connection, or some type of thinking work ... maybe deductive vs. inductive reasoning? explicit vs. implicit?

Here's what Moffett in Student-Centered p 237 says about humor:

...Cartoons depend on wit or **incongruity** for their humor; they may teach, satirize, or insult. Caricature and other **exaggeration** in the drawing are **juxtaposed** with a succinct, often **understated caption**. Because the **allusions** may be subtle or unfamiliar, cartoon reading and producing make difficult demands, appropriate for mature students. Projecting cartoons with an opaque projector and reading and discussing the captions together can help less sophisticated students understand them. (my emphasis added)

We're talking about a juxtaposition of drawing to words, allusions that are subtle and unfamiliar (how to get them familiar? have prior experiences?), incongruities, and exaggerations. I know Moffett is referring to humor in cartoons, but perhaps this can be applied to humor used in commercials as well.

Wonder what other text to look at about humor used in commercials ... McLuhan? RenGen [2007]? Ad Nauseum [2009]? a type of rhetorical history text?
(researcher memo, 1/19/11)

In this note, I'm following Hatch's suggestion of coding with my own categories first and then looking to others for possible pattern codes. The others I looked to in this memo were Moffett, McLuhan, and in the back of my mind, Odell.

Kelsey and Jonah were not the only students whose words I played with. From the pages I typed of each student's journal of all of their writing, I gathered all entries according to dates. This gave me an easy way to compare student writing and their thinking related to the prompt or activity on the date of the entry. I quickly was able to recognize Bailee's writing voice in any list of writing because her writing voice was

friendly and the ideas and word choices often bordered on inappropriate. Bailee's writing made me smile.

Continuing to play with the data, I made a list of only the comments written during the first-response to commercials activity. I listed these comments first by student, getting a feel for how they respond to commercials in general (see Table 8). I noticed that Kelsey questioned commercials, "what does a monk got to do with pepsi"; that Scott did not attend to the directions, writing comments to only two of the eleven commercials in this activity; that Desirae and Bethany wrote a larger quantity than the other students, with Desirae listing a series of comments and Bethany writing in complete sentences; and Bailee was her fun self, "creepy UM!!!! Dude that is Freakin scary!!!"

Table 8: Sample of table organization of student comments to first-response writing

Commercials	Students and their comments
ipod pepsi roller babies PS3 baby Huggies 70s slinky 80s slinky 90s isuzu anti-smoke boogers anti-smoke hamster Dove	Desirae cool, energetic, sort-sweet cool wave motion thumbs up cool, unexpected, different weird funny, cute, all audiences, young kids, modern, new, original scary, not cool, ugh, creepy! cute, adorable, smiled, made for everyone annoying, bad song, bad acting, low quality cheap, annoying, bad song, bad acting, annoying TERRIBLE! Annoying, bad acting, bad song, annoying gross, unexpected, funny, weird hate it!! Sad, leads you wrong, not cool! fake, makes me mad, truth revealed, more natural, pretty people

Manipulating the information in a different array, I listed the comments by commercial, comparing the range of students' reactions. To a Pepsi commercial containing no words, only a monk's journey from child to full monk-hood, ready to receive the symbol shown

on all the monks' foreheads, which happened to be simply the mark left when smashing the forehead down onto an empty Pepsi can, students wrote this variety of comments:

cool, unexpected, different weird
Chinese, funny
stupid, useless
(blank)
funny
funny, weird and even more weird
what does monk got to do with pepsi
I thought it was so cool
funny but stupid, hate beginning
It seems sad at first but then it's really funny.
??? Um...? Wtf?! Wat.the.fudge
hilarious funny tanline
funny
weird. Don't get

In yet another manipulation of the same data, I listed the first-response comments into one long list, and used crayons to separate the comments into categories: movement; odd/weird/unusual/question/confusing; love/cute/funny/cool/cheesy; gross/scary; sad; righteous conclusions. I wondered about the judgments students make at this age, and whether they were making evaluations or judgments, and whether these are the same thing. I wondered about the level of abstraction throughout the group's comments.

At one point, I conducted a "direct interpretation" (Creswell, 2007, referencing Stake, 1995) where a researcher takes a single instance and attempts to draw meaning from it. I took the comments of one student to one commercial and considered the comments in terms of Bloom's taxonomy. Even while looking at the data through this other lens, though, I still found myself returning to Odell's characteristics of thinking rather than Bloom's.

I continued to play with the data in a series of analytic manipulations. I put the information into different arrays and created data displays (Yin, 2003, referencing Miles & Huberman, 1994). I took the first-response comments of four students, typed each in different fonts, cut them apart, and laid the comments out at different levels of a ladder of abstraction. I took a photo of this diagram and hung it on a wall in my office. I did not see the differing levels of abstracting, but saw the dissonance these students were thinking. Their "I don't know" and "cruel" and "really weird" and "hilarious" were all comments that things were not adding up, that what they were viewing was not in balance with what society says things should be. It seemed to me that even though all of these students may not be able to verbalize or explain why something was weird or funny, they recognized the imbalance, and that, to me, was evidence of their thinking.

I made a list of all comments written the first day, before any commercials were watched. Then I took these comments and sorted them into categories: note techniques (production values) that are used; repeat storyline; know the reality of the commercial being persuasive; writing has conversational tone; all CAPS, !!!, txtng language (OMG, LOL, 2 for to) used; emotional word choice -piss, hate, cry, sad; repeat text used in commercials; use of dialogue but not dialogue used in commercials; can "love" and "hate" in same writing / contradict self; lists as well as complete sentences; specific product names as well as general product type. I took these points / noticings and made a chart with columns marked "My noticings" and "examples." After looking at the chart, I decided I could group these into fewer categories. I cut apart the chart and grouped similar together, reducing the number from 12 categories to 6, grouping them as I did so

in three major categories, jotting notes about what research to consider regarding the categories:

How students write about commercials - actual writing style / choices (probably similar to Odell's selecting and encoding, will consider that later) (include here "emotional word choice"; "all CAPS, etc."; "writing has conversational tone"; "use of dialogue but not dialogue used in commercials"; "lists as well as complete sentences")

Production values (realized and unrealized?):

Students notice production techniques, although they may not have realized these were choices producers made (include here "note techniques (production values) that are used")

The effect of these producer choices on students probably also not realized by students (include here "repeat storyline", "repeat text used in commercials", "specific product names as well as general product type") (Fox wrote about repetition in his TV Commercials book, will consider that later)

Higher / different thinking (these just all seemed to group together b/c they involved higher order skills than listing production values)

In reality, what happens ("know the reality of the commercial being persuasive")

Contradict / conflict ("can 'love' and 'hate' in same writing / contradict self")

Connect / personal experiences ("personal experiences, connections")

I've spent so much time on the March 30 writings, because these were writings completed before talk and viewing occurred. Talk has tremendous effect on our thinking, so I wanted to see students' thinking before they talked. As for wanting to know what they thought before viewing, I was curious which commercials have made an impression on the students before showing images that may help them connect to other images / commercials. Guess I wanted pure student thought first, like a pretest.

To know the effect of talk on their writing, I could look at the late 3/30 writing and the 3/31 writing.
(researcher memo, 1/24/11)

I considered the three groupings to become findings: students' response to commercials and their writing style; students' response to production techniques; students' response to

commercials and contradictions. I then wrote these findings as sentences, which morphed over the months and which now appear in Chapter 4 as:

1. Young adults teach each other technical skills.
2. Young adults digress while writing about commercials and print ads, but return to initial important points.
3. Young adults use talk to explore and clarify meaning as they reflect on others' feedback and response.
4. Young adults create and compose through play and song.
5. Young adults revise their work without direct instruction:
 - Revise when given time.
 - Revise when reflecting on peer comments.
 - Revise when given examples of professional and student-made commercials and print ads.
 - Revise when handed the camera to film their own work.
6. Young adults make connections to advertisements.
7. Young adults respond to commercials by repeating slogans, jingles, and narratives.
8. Young adults notice inconsistencies in the commercials.
9. Young adults contradict themselves when expressing ideas about commercials and print advertisements.
10. Young adults imitate and borrow techniques used in commercials.
11. Young adults apply what they have learned to a new context:
 - Young adults make connections in a new context.

Young adults identify audience in a new context.

Young adults switch between being a producer of ads and a consumer.

Young adults think critically about the purpose of advertising media.

I took one group of two and wrote their individual stories containing my observations and impressions, considering all writings and comments made by them. Then, I took the same group of two and using a chart, I listed the commercials they said they watched or liked (from journal notes and class discussion); appeals used in those commercials (determined by teacher and researcher); product chosen by student for final project; appeals used by student in final projects (determined by teacher and researcher); and appeals students realize they used (during reflection and/or evaluation). A copy of this chart is attached as Appendix J.

Throughout my analysis journey, I talked about the data with members of my committee, other doctoral students, and at times the students' teacher, because this type of exploratory talk allows us to think our way into a problem and reshape it, bringing together old information with new (Barnes, 1992).

My entire data analysis process is long and convoluted, and it is difficult for me to articulate it accurately here. But a sketchy synopsis shows how the basic steps I took in my data analysis were guided by Hatch (2002):

1. decide what topic area I am analyzing for
2. read and mark and code for topics
3. look for and note patterns and relationships

4. label categories, then consult research texts for similar categories and more ideas of what to look for in the data
5. test my hypotheses regarding the patterns
6. look for relationships among identified patterns
7. write patterns as one-sentence generalizations
8. select excerpts to support my generalizations
9. rinse and repeat

I feel like the data analysis I did on the data I collected was thorough, to the best of my ability, which at this early stage in my development as a researcher will greatly improve over the years. I close this Chapter of my dissertation with a brief statement of research ethics. In Chapter Four I discuss the findings I made through analysis of the data I collected. Chapter Four, then, contains my "lessons learned" from this case analysis (Creswell, 2007, p. 75, referencing Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Research ethics

My duties as the researcher were to invite participation in the study; explain the research procedure; obtain signed consent forms from the participants; attend, observe and take notes on all class meetings during the media literacy unit; assist in planning lessons and co-teach with the students' teacher at the teacher's request; and interview participants in small groups and/or individually.

Since this study followed the students through a regularly scheduled unit of study in their classroom, all students were required to complete all activities. Those students who agreed to be participants in the study were also asked to meet with me in small groups or individual interview sessions held during school hours, and answer interview

questions. The benefits for the participants included the provision of a safe environment in which the participants could talk about how they felt in a class incorporating the analysis and production of media. Participants might also enjoy the opportunity to explore their learning experience in a thoughtful, critical way, and better understand how they think and how they engage with media. The final results of the study are available upon the participants' and/or their guardians' request.

Autonomy. There was no coercion to join the study. Other than the interviews I conducted outside of the classroom, all discussions, writings and small group work were completed as part of the regular classroom work and routine. I reviewed the consent and assent forms with the seventh graders and reminded them throughout the data collection period that their participation was voluntary, that although they could not opt out of the class work the teacher assigned, they could choose not to participate in the interviews conducted as part of this research study. I told them they could withdraw from the interviews at any time and that they would not be penalized in any way should they choose not to participate or to withdraw. The parents of one student declined permission for their child to participate, and all parts this student played in classroom discussion, small group work, and filmed commercials have not been used in this research.

Beneficence. To maximize the benefits and minimize the harm, I told the students that this study provided a safe environment in which they could talk about how they feel while participating in a media literacy class. I told the participants that they might enjoy the opportunity to explore their learning experience in a thoughtful, critical way and that through our conversations they may better understand how they think and how they engage with media. I also told students that this research may contribute

findings to the field of education that will assist teachers in working with students and in improving the quality of teaching.

Justice. To equalize our roles, I told the participants that while I was a teacher at another elementary school in their school district, for this study I was a student at the university.

Dealing with potential for harm. This project does not involve any risks greater than those encountered in everyday life. Participants were not purposely deceived, and this project did not pose physical danger. Any remote chances of harm may be social in nature. For example, a student *may* feel that his/her comments were somewhat “wrong” and then he/she later might regret. Because the goal is eventual publication, some students may worry that a reader will be able to figure out who they are. However, every attempt was made to keep the participants’ identity confidential and to conduct interviews in an environment that was open, trusting and warm.

Informed consent. Permission to conduct this study was obtained through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Missouri at Columbia. Permission to conduct the study was also received from the assistant superintendent of the school district and the elementary school principal where the study was conducted. In accordance with IRB permission, I had parents or guardians sign a consent form and had the students sign an assent form. I told research subjects that they are participating in a dissertation study for a doctoral degree and that the purpose of the study is to add to the research regarding studying critical thinking processes used by seventh grade students during class and small group discussions during a media literacy unit, especially in multimedia composition, or production.

Chapter 4 - Findings

In this chapter I present my findings of one language arts classroom immersed in advertising media during one unit of study. The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of seventh graders during a propaganda unit based on advertisements to answer the question: **What are the experiences of young adults during a unit of study in which advertising media is the focus?** The following results are organized into two main questions: 1) **How do instructional practices influence young adults' responses to media?** and 2) **How do young adults respond to the content of advertising media?**

While Chapter 3 outlines the activities experienced by the young adults during this unit of study as designed by their teacher, Whitney, in this chapter I provide additional descriptions of student experiences with the instructional practices. I also describe the student responses to the content of the advertising media with which they worked. I begin with a "snapshot" description of how the classroom physically looks. Within this snapshot, I discuss Whitney's constructivist instructional practices within the classroom. Following the description of the classroom and student responses to instructional strategies, I provide a compilation of the types of responses these seventh grade students made to the content of the advertising media itself.

Overview of Methodology

To answer the above questions, I conducted a case study involving a seventh grade class in a rural, K-8 school. For four weeks one spring semester, the students and their teacher participated in this study. All students participated in the activities their teacher designed for a propaganda unit using advertising media as text. Conversations

were recorded during whole class discussions and small group work sessions, journals were scanned, and fifteen students participated in interviews about their final projects. The primary source of data is from the students' own words, captured in their journals and recordings of in-class and small group conversations as well as the final project group interviews.

Overview of Data Analysis Procedures

I began analyzing by reading and rereading the interviews and the scanned journal pages. As I read, I marked and coded for topics, searched for patterns and relationships, labeled categories, and consulted research texts for similar categories and more ideas of what to look for in the data. I also listened to each day's recording, both my own Pulse pen recording of the entire class and the individual group recordings, noting portions of the conversations I needed to transcribe for further consideration. Research sources I used included Watson's and Cambourne's descriptions of whole language classrooms; Odell's (1999) model of assessing thinking; Moffett's *Detecting Growth in Language* (1992); Rosenblatt's (2005) linguistic-experiential background and aesthetic response to text along with Soter and her colleagues' (2010) expressive response to text; Elbow's (1973/1998) *Writing Without Teachers*; and Fox's (2000) descriptions of student responses to television commercials.

Getting Reacquainted with the Teacher and Students

In Chapter 3, "Methodology," I introduced the teacher and students involved in the study. Having taught twenty-plus years, Whitney is an early-childhood-trained teacher who holds a minor degree in history, and who is teaching seventh and eighth grade communication arts. She describes herself as a constructivist who teaches to each

student's strengths and believes if a student discovers something on his own, it is his forever. She believes every voice should be heard in the classroom, and this is why she arranges the student tables in a rectangle, so no one is talking to another's back. Whitney says she “thinks musically”, sharing her musical talents with her students through breaking out into song and supporting students' own musical talents through directing the eighth grade spring musical.

Though oral and written responses featured similar qualities for all students, I will highlight a few students for each of the topics in my findings section. Before explaining each finding with multiple student examples, I will provide more in-depth information about one student, Cheyenne, who added to class discussions when asked, completed all writing and ad-creating assignments, and worked well in groups and individually. I share her experience to help establish the context of this rural classroom and the types of data collected and analyzed before I present the findings.

Cheyenne, a work-conscientious, quiet student. Cheyenne is usually quiet and attentive, participating in class discussions when she is called on by the teacher and rarely interrupting. She takes notes during class discussions and focuses as she works on in-class assignments instead of visiting with neighbors like so many of the seventh grade students do. She gets top grades and is in the gifted education program. She is absent from class one day each week to attend gifted classes in the school district. She prefers to work alone rather than choose between her friends, Catherine and Desirae, both of whom are in the gifted program with her and who are not friends with each other. Cheyenne does not smile often. However, during workshop one day I observed a different Cheyenne, this one very happy and animated while talking with another student, Amy.

That day, Amy's group was revising their filmed commercial in another classroom. I went with them to supervise. Cheyenne and Amy were across the room, very animated, standing, dancing, giggling, as they, among other topics, brainstormed ideas for additional commercials, even though Cheyenne's group partner was Jonah. It is difficult for me to know whether Cheyenne's change in animation came from a change in location (from the regular classroom full of classmates to an adjoining classroom with five other girls) or from a change in brainstorming partners (from partner Jonah to friend Ashley). It seems both location and partner likely affected the change from sober to giggly Cheyenne, because on a previous day, while filming commercials outside of the classroom, Cheyenne also became very animated. In addition, Jonah was not her choice as a partner, but her partner at the teacher's request because Cheyenne prefers to work alone, and students rarely ask Jonah to join their group, due to his incessant talking and lack of work ethic.

During fluent writing time, after answering the prompt given by her teacher, Cheyenne wrote about personal events. The first day's writing she started with "ADs are boring! they annoy me so much" for a total of four sentences. The paragraph following this consisted of fourteen sentences as she wrote about two new bucket calves (newborn calves disowned by their mothers and needing to be raised by hand, using a bucket or bottle with an attached nipple) which her family received the night before, one of whom she named M&M (and while I initially thought she had named the calf after the candy product M&M, she later wrote that she had named the calf after Auntie Em from *The Wizard of Oz*), and how she hoped to help them grow up "healthy and happy." Her third, final paragraph was eight sentences in length, returned to the subject of commercials, and

began with "I love commercials with catchy songs or phrases [sic]." The way Cheyenne transferred from one topic to another and back to the first, was like she finished the "have to write" assignment, and then went on to fun, personal events which are more meaningful to her. After writing for awhile on her choice topic, she was able to return to the original prompt and write more. During her writing entries, Cheyenne seemed to change her attitude towards commercials from negative to positive, from being bored and annoyed by ads, to loving commercials with catchy tunes. This statement would again be contradicted when Cheyenne shared in class her annoyance with the "sniff-sniff-hooray" detergent commercial phrase, a phrase which had also become a t-shirt slogan, and a replay of a Direct TV commercial where she wrote verbatim the conversation between actors on the commercial.

One class period when the teacher asked students to choose one of four commercials to write about, Cheyenne chose a State Farm commercial from Asia. She noticed that all of the babies in the hospital nursery were Asian, but the insurance agent appeared European-American. It is interesting that Cheyenne noted this discrepancy. This entry was five sentences long, stretching to three-quarters of a page in length. She noted, "This commercial shows what State Farm could help you with if you are a professional athlete or just somebody that gets hurt and needs help that they can rely on State Farm to keep them out of debt." The phrase "keep them out of debt" and the word "rely" seem out of the ordinary when compared to her other writings and the writing of her classmates. Because the commercial was in Mandarin Chinese, I do not believe she got this wording from this commercial. I wonder how well she knows other State Farm

commercials and whether she was able to get the word and phrase from those other commercials to include in this journal entry.

An entry on the third day of the propaganda unit indicated Cheyenne's family received another bucket calf, a subject she wrote about for twelve sentences. After this almost page-long paragraph, Cheyenne wrote seven additional short sentences covering four different subjects: scratches on her arm from track practice the afternoon before; the song the teacher played while they wrote; another student's skinned shin; and the new track uniforms received the previous afternoon. In comparing the length of the entries to the entry subject, Cheyenne wrote twelve sentences on a topic she cares about, then seems to lose her flow, or become distracted by what's going on in the classroom, and write seven additional sentences on four different topics, including three things she notices in the classroom.

Even though Cheyenne did not have as many dated entries as other students due to her gifted class schedule taking her out of the classroom a day each week, she wrote as much and more than half her classmates. After responding to prompts, Cheyenne often wrote about her rural life outside of school, including a poem about butchering chickens: "cluck cluck goes the bird. There goes the head" ending the first stanza (Cheyenne, journal entry, April 9, 2010). About pigs on the farm, she wrote "they are stinkers" and described how she almost rode a pig that had gotten loose and ran through her legs (Cheyenne, journal entry, April 19, 2010). Another entry reported that her dog had killed a raccoon, and when cleaning out an old truck which her grandpa promised she could drive in a few years, she found "one very old dead rat" and "an ancient McDonalds cup."

During the first activity of the unit when her teacher asked the class to write their first responses to eleven different commercials before talking, the comments Cheyenne made include:

looks cool but sounds retarded	odd/annoying
hilarious funny tanline	annoying
thats cool & cute	gross! tissues
scary, creepy, never play on tv	sad, it moved
odd, cute	weird

In addition to comments Cheyenne wrote in her journal, she was often a contributor to whole class discussions which were not prompted by watching commercials. Comments Cheyenne made in her journal and during class discussion about what commercials she watches at home and commercials she likes or does not like include:

- about medicine commercials, she writes that they have “no color, tell just information”;
- about Direct TV commercials, she writes the actors’ dialogue and complains that the commercial is “aired repeatedly”;
- about Gain commercial, which she mistook for a Tide commercial, she wrote and commented that the “sniff-sniff-hooray” slogan is now on t-shirts;
- she commented she liked the Chrysler commercial where “the toy monkey gets a tattoo”;

- she wrote that she “hates Amazon Kindle ones” because “I don’t like the people” and the commercials have “annoying songs” (which I researched to find the titles of "Fly Me Away" by Annie Little, "Stole My Heart" and "C'mon Let's Go" by Marcus Ashley and Annie Little);
- she wrote that she “hate[s] Hardee's” which she says are “so boring, you hear them [the actors] actually eating, it drives me insane”;
- about ActivOn, she replayed the line, "I hate your commercial but I love your product" during class discussion (this line found its way into her and Justin's parody commercial);
- she wrote that she likes Shiloh's Bar & Grill (a radio commercial in the region);
- for the Enterprise commercial, she wrote their slogan, “we're a car shop ... you have relatives”; and
- she wrote that the commercial for Starburst with the albino lifeguard and a Scottish man was funny (I noted this was for "Starburst contradictions").

Cheyenne often repeats dialogue straight from commercials. I noticed during class discussion and through her journal writings that when the commercial is associated with something familiar, such as the sock monkey of the Chrysler commercial, Cheyenne likes the commercial. Determined by her teacher and me, the appeals used in the commercials which Cheyenne wrote and spoke about include: repetition, catchy songs and phrases, childhood memory, songs that stick in the mind, emotions involved (irritation), dialogue and contrasts. When asked on the Final Project Reflection about the

appeals she and Jonah used in their final projects, Cheyenne noted, "We used annoying and truthful, repetition, composition, association, diversion, maybe a little confusion" but she didn't elaborate with examples. This lack of examples was due most likely to my poorly worded prompt on the Final Project Reflection:

Remember the tricks and techniques of propaganda used in ads (especially the arrow handout in your notebook), including:

Opposites

Intensifying:

- repetition
- association
- composition

Downplaying:

- omission
- diversion
- confusion

How did you use these tricks in your ads? (Note: You may not have used all of the tricks, but each ad used some tricks.)

In contrast to Cheyenne's response, her teacher and I noted a variety of appeals used in Cheyenne and Jonah's final projects:

- repetition ("Scar Away, apply directly to the scar. Scar Away, apply directly to the scar"; "Call now! Call now!");
- constant motion and movement in and out of the scene by actors;
- diversion tactics of "But wait -- there's more!" and "Absolutely free!";
- disclaimer;
- animation with a scar lifting away magically from India's chin, imitated from an Abreva commercial of a cold sore magically disappearing;

- honesty "I hate your commercial, and I still hate your product" which is borrowed from the ActivOn commercial;
- emotions in voices;
- voice-over, also borrowed from ActivOn commercial;
- music;
- violence of kids fighting and mom saving or helping the kids.

In her final reflection, Cheyenne thought what her group had done best was filming the parody. She noted that if there was more time, she would like to have added more humor to their commercial with the kids fighting. In a final evaluation of her participation in the media literacy / propaganda unit, Cheyenne noted that the work she did included writing the script, acting, making the print ad, finding research, helping revise commercials, and presenting the work. She thought she deserved an A for her work. She felt the other member of her group, Jonah, earned a grade of C because "He tried to help but I had everything in mind. He didn't write scripts or make print ad. He did some revising and film our commercials." Tamara filmed Cheyenne and Jonah's "but wait!" commercial, and Justin filmed the kids' fighting commercial. I did note, though, that Jonah helped at least with the script-writing, a conversation I transcribed and noted as a successful, focused day for the two.

During the three focus group activities, each student wrote comments on a columned worksheet regarding the strengths of each commercial and suggestions for improvement. Cheyenne made a variety of comments during the focus group activities including these for the different final project groups:

Name of products advertised in the final group projects	Comments Cheyenne wrote on the focus group sheet
Bieberlicious	girls act right, good comparison, good timing
Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches	hilarious what with the dancing, kind of nasty, too many, weird, not long enough
Arg-Off	pretty good, could be more eye catching; funny, could of been louder
Adrenolaid	realistic, they act real, could be more interesting, could be better pictures, comparisons; funny could be words
Pretty-On	cool, different, really cool, looks like a real pop-up ad; too soft voices, very realistic, good Amy, Desirae

My description of Cheyenne's experience during the propaganda unit serves to set the context for this classroom and study. She and the sixteen other seventh grade students help illustrate the findings. The following results include excerpts that focus on the student participants.

Snapshot of a constructivist classroom.

I wonder how they make the commercial ads and why some ads can be real stupid at times when others are funny or serious. Talking about ads some helped me to understand them. (Kenzie, student journal, April 2010)

The teacher in this study used several strategies to create a constructivist learning environment. These strategies include: text immersion; collaborative groups; writing invitations; workshop routine; confidence-building attitude; and scaffolding questions. I describe each of these strategies below.

Immersion. Students were immersed in advertising media. The teacher, Whitney, found commercials on the internet, mostly through YouTube (with the help of the technology person in the district, she was able to bypass the school district's security

firewall to access the commercials; students, however, remained blocked at school from accessing the YouTube website on their own). She played the approximately sixty different commercials for the class using an LCD overhead projector attached to her computer and allowed time after each commercial for the class to discuss their reaction. During these class discussions, the teacher did not provide the one "right" interpretation of the commercial. She instead used questions to scaffold her students into creating meaning on their own from what they saw on the commercials, what they heard from each other, and from what they knew of the world around them. The teacher continued immersing her students in the out-of-school texts of advertisements when she brought in several magazines, removed the advertisements from each, and handed the separate piles to small groups of students. The small groups looked through the ads, noted the audience for which the ads and, therefore, the entire magazine, were addressed, and chose an ad to deconstruct.

Later in the unit, the teacher showed students examples of commercials made by previous classes. By doing so, she continued to immerse students in advertising media, while at the same time showing the students that she had high expectations that they, too, could complete the task of creating three advertisements. Seeing the student-made commercials may have also relieved any anxiety students might have if they doubted their abilities to create commercials. Also relieving anxiety for students was the playful atmosphere which the workshop environment provided. Through play they were able to compose, practice, and revise their commercials.

Collaborative groups. Working in small groups allowed students ample opportunities to talk since small groups allow individual students more turns in a

conversation versus the whole class where total talking turns are limited. While talking, students received feedback on their thoughts from their group members, and had chances to explore, transact, and clarify meaning with others and with themselves as they considered their peers' comments.

Writing invitations. In addition to exploring ideas within their collaborative groups, writing in journals allowed students opportunities to reflect on their thinking. At times, the teacher prompted students with "Write what your goals are for the day concerning your commercials and print ads" which led students to take responsibility for decisions about composing their final project advertising media. Students used their journals not only to reflect on their thinking and respond to teacher prompts, but also to write on personal topics, draft scripts for potential commercials, doodle, and exchange notes with classmates. Whitney says about writing, "We start the year writing, on the first day, and talking. We write to communicate, to practice, to write better. WE write, because I'm doing it too, not grading, or e-mailing, but writing" (Whitney, personal email, May 2011). Whitney also responds quickly to student writing, either verbally or in writing. In this classroom, students owned their journals, and students wrote what they needed and wanted to write in those journals.

Workshop routine. One of the most prominent strategies Whitney used with her seventh graders was giving them time. She dedicated time during a production workshop atmosphere where students helped each other, taught each other, and composed together. She designed this time similar to her reading and writing workshops, with the schedule including a mini-lesson (this could be several commercials shown, a demonstration of how to use a piece of equipment, writing to a prompt); a review of goals for the final

project; a stretch of time for groups to work and for her to conference with students; and at the end, a sharing or review of what was produced. During this student-centered workshop time, students assumed responsibility for how they would use the work-time, student responsibility being a mark of a whole language learning environment (Watson, 1996; Cambourne, 1995). Students talked, wrote scripts, read scripts, revised scripts. They created props, practiced scripts, filmed commercials, watched filmed takes, and revised as they felt necessary. They used the few, outdated computers in the classroom to compose print ads, type scripts, research topics, and locate images.

Snapshot of a constructivist teacher. During workshop, after filming their commercial, groups used the computers to splice film takes together and added music and text effects to finalize their commercial. The workshop was also a time during which Whitney made herself available to the students to brainstorm ideas, provide feedback, and give prompts when creative juices ebbed. Whitney handed the camera to the students to figure out how to operate it for filming their commercials. She helped students upload their filmed takes to Windows MovieMaker and offered advice as students spliced together takes and added effects. Another look at Table 5 in Chapter 3 demonstrates how Whitney structured the production workshop time to be heavy on student-selected versus teacher-directed activities. As mentioned above, it appears the workshop environment provided time for students to play with ideas, and through that play, students seemed productive and unstressed as they composed, practiced, and revised their commercials.

Confidence-building attitude. Throughout the unit, Whitney acted with confidence that her students could handle any task she set for them and any task they set for themselves. She wrote about this in an email to me:

I give more work than most, or expect more from them anyway. I don't give worksheets so nothing is easy. And my expectations are high. But on the plus side, my expectations are high, I don't give worksheets, and if they've written something they know I will read it and comment back. (Whitney, personal email, May 2011)

Whitney also assured students she was available for assistance as needed. Whether this assistance was during the unit workshop, or at other times, Whitney was available to her students:

I guess the bottom line is they know I care, they know if they message me through FB [Facebook] (we aren't friends, but they can message) or send me a text message, I'll respond. I'll be at their games, see their concerts, stay after school or help them during study hall. I give them my winter for the [school] play. They know I care, so they are more likely to care in return. (personal email, May 2011)

As mentioned above, when the teacher showed students examples of commercials made by previous classes, she was showing the students that she had high expectations that they, too, could complete the task of creating three advertisements. Seeing the student-made commercials may have also relieved any anxiety students might have felt if they doubted their abilities to create commercials. Cambourne (1995) noted that students are more likely to engage when they are free from anxiety and when demonstrations are given by someone they like, respect, admire, trust and would like to emulate. When I asked why students liked her, Whitney said, "Why do they like me? Sometimes they don't!" (personal email, May 2011). She added that her one classroom rule is to "Show respect and receive it back. While I can't say it works 100% of the time, the kids are aware that it is the goal" (personal email, May 2011).

The attitude of high expectations Whitney maintained in her classroom, invited students to be, as Johnston (2004) writes, the "kinds of people we think they are and gives them opportunities to practice being those kinds of people" (p. 79). In essence,

having an attitude of high expectations offers students an "identity kit" (Gee, 2003) full of tools to become members of this group of learners.

Scaffolding questions. One of the strategies I zeroed in on, while listening to Whitney teach, was her use of questions to scaffold her students into creating meaning. Whitney does not quickly provide an answer, but instead, moves her students toward the answer through modeling a process of asking questions, a strategy used in constructivist pedagogy (Bruner, 1961; Vygotsky, 1986). I asked her about how she considers what questions she will ask and she replied, "I don't recall making specific choices about the kinds of questions I'm asking, but then again, it's just what we do as teachers, right?" (Whitney Fredericks, personal email, 7/16/11). When engaged in conversation about different commercials, Whitney admits that she does not always understand the techniques used by advertisers. She does, however, continue to model asking questions in the hopes that her students will also question what they see and hear:

I don't have an exact answer, but I want it to pester the kids, make them think about it when they're away from class. Make them wonder about other ads they see and really question why they are created the way they are, what message is being conveyed through what's said, and what isn't said. I think if I just gave them the answers, they'd be done thinking about them the second class was over (and in reality, would never have thought of them at all). By trying to get them to question, I'm hoping for kids like Brent Heaton, who told me as a senior that I'd ruined watching ads for him because he always has to look deeper and can't just take them at face value anymore. Bravo! (Whitney Fredericks, personal email 7/16/11)

In my research, I found that Whitney's questioning techniques mirror what is referred to as reciprocal teaching. According to Berk and Winsler (1995) the role of the teacher in a reciprocal teaching situation is to "scaffold student involvement in the discussion in ways that eventually lead to full participation in the dialogue, as well as mastery of the text at hand" (p. 118-119). The teacher does this through a series of

cognitive strategies which include questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting. In the beginning, the teacher models the strategies in order to prompt children's entry into the transaction, and as the discussion goes along, the teacher supports and provides feedback while gradually reducing her participation in the discussion. Whitney's questions and discussion prompts resemble reciprocal teaching. I asked Whitney what reciprocal teaching meant to her, since she mentioned using reciprocal teaching especially with her struggling readers. She responded in an email to me:

Recip[rocal] teaching moves from heavy teacher modeling to minimal teacher interference as students take control of the learning process. Model questioning, clarifying, summarizing, etc; scaffold students as they begin taking over, and eventually the teacher acts as a facilitator only as students lead the learning situation. Remember, [I am a] big fan of the kids surprising me with what they come up with! Don't care what a textbook answer would be as long as kids are learning as they work toward an answer. (Whitney Fredericks, personal email 7/17/11)

Keeping these ideas in mind, I looked again at Whitney's questioning sequences, with a question of whether the students followed her lead of applying questions to the commercials watched. I wanted to look at how Whitney moves away from providing answers toward the process of asking questions to help students answer, and I wanted to track the scaffolding strategies Whitney uses to help students discover information for themselves.

Slinky discussion. I chose a segment in a whole class discussion where Whitney showed students a series of three commercials related to the toy, the Slinky, to demonstrate how authors create and/or make use of changes in audience values across decades. She did a similar activity with a series of laundry detergent commercials which showed the changing role of wives. The first commercial in the laundry series shows the wife's duty is to wash her husband's clothes in order to keep him happy ("ring around the

collar" Wisk, 1968). The final commercial shows a man being interviewed by a potential male boss. The burden of clean laundry was not placed on a wife, because the stain on the interviewee's otherwise clean shirt appeared to be part of his lunch which he apparently dropped on his shirt that day. The stain talked so loudly that it distracted the potential boss's attention from what the interviewee was saying ("talking stain" Tide to Go, 2008).

In the task of analysis of three Slinky commercials, Whitney showed one ad from the 1970s, one from the 1980s, and then 1990s ad from a car company which used the Slinky jingle to advertise a car called the "Amigo." I include here the lyrics to the jingle, which made up the majority of the commercials' verbal text (Slinky commercials from 1970s and 1980s).

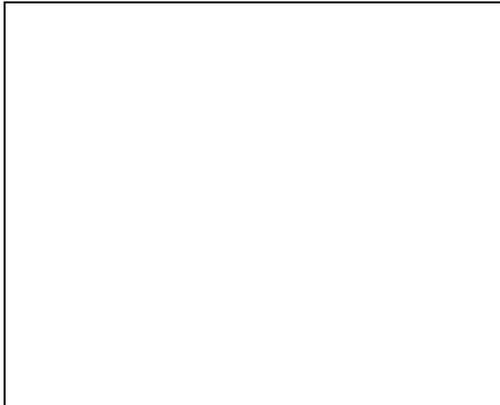


Figure 14 Slinky spring toy circa 1950. Whitney used three commercials related to the Slinky as examples of changes in commercials over decades. Picture from obit-mag.com.

Table 9 Jingles (songs) for Slinky toy

<p>Commercial jingles for Slinky toy</p> <p>1970s commercial jingle (1980s is similar)</p> <p><i>It's slinky! It's slinky! For fun it's a wonderful toy.</i></p> <p><i>What walks down stairs, alone or in pairs, and makes a slinkety sound?</i></p> <p><i>A spring! A spring! A marvelous thing! Everyone knows it's slinky.</i></p> <p><i>It's slinky! It's slinky! For fun it's a wonderful toy.</i></p> <p><i>It's fun for a girl and a boy.</i></p>

1990s commercial for an Amigo car which uses the Slinky jingle

*What goes down stairs, alone or in pairs, and even goes off-road?
A thing! A thing! A marvelous thing! Everyone know it's Amigo!
Amigo! Amigo! The sun and love and joy!
Amigo! Amigo! It's fun for a girl and a boy!
Amigo! Amigo! The sun and love and joy!
Amigo! Amigo! It's fun for a girl and a boy!*

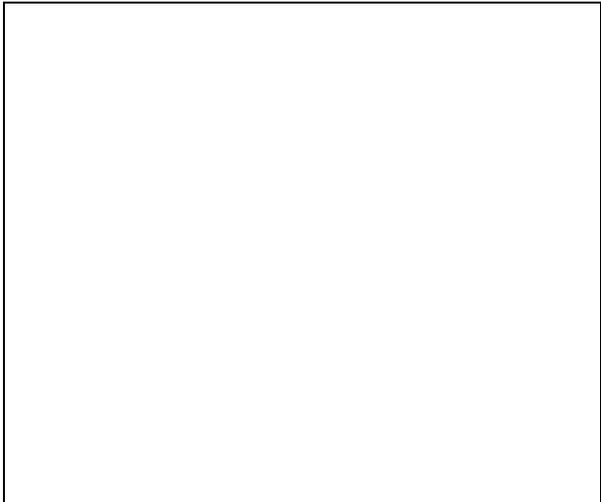


Figure 15 Screenshots from commercial for Isuzu Amigo car which uses the Slinky jingle music to market the car. The actors in this 1990s commercial sport clothing, hairstyles, and "mutton-chop" sideburns, all of which were popular fashion in the 1970s. (Isuzu commercial retrieved from <http://www.tvspots.tv/video/4646/AMERICAN-ISUZU-MOTORS-SLINKY>)

The discussion regarding these commercials took about five minutes. I transcribed as much of the whole class conversation as was audible on the recording. A transcription of the entire conversation is attached as Appendix K. Here I discuss what I noticed about Whitney's questioning.

Whitney waited until all three Slinky commercials finished playing before leading a discussion of them. As the 1990s commercial played, the teacher and I laughed at the juxtaposition of 1970s fashion with the 1990s car (we both grew up in the 1970s and the actors in the 1990s commercial wore clothing, hairstyles, and "mutton-chop" sideburns,

all of which were popular fashion in the 1970s). The students responded with puzzled comments, and one student said, "Stop it now!" After the 1990s commercial finished, Whitney began the whole class discussion with an open-ended question: "So, obviously, I didn't find a Slinky ad for the 90s. Why do you think that might be?"

Several students responded, one saying that Slinkys are "way out of style." Whitney added the statement: "One of the sixth graders had a Slinky in the hallway last week." This statement from their teacher seemed to change the tone of answers which followed, including a student saying, "Slinkys are awesome!" and another saying, "They're fun." Whitney was acting as a "thinking coach" suggesting a possible line of thought and not evaluating answers at this point (Golding, 2011, p. 477).

Another open-ended question from Whitney, "What do you think of the Slinky's ad?" led students to make judgments, such as "boring and annoying," "cheesy," and "I love it." A judgment is a conclusion a person makes from his personal evaluation of observed facts; judgments without support are not believable (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990, p. 25-27). Whitney asked students for statements of evidence for their judgments. Whitney singled out one student's comment of "things you've done with it" and repeated the "it," "Yeah, it's things you've done with a Slinky." Repeating the single student's comment gives validity to that comment, and sends a message to the other students that their answers were invalid, or, at least, not an answer with which Whitney could work. There were other times in the conversation where judgments were made and for which Whitney asks for more evidence for their statements, e.g., descriptions other than "cheesy."

There are also times in the conversation where Whitney chose a student comment to expand on, a comment which allowed her to move students toward the analysis she wanted them to understand. Toward the end of the discussion, Whitney led students to complete her sentence, "So if you could afford to buy a Slinky then, and you wanted to buy a Slinky then ..." to which Tamara continued with, "You can afford to buy ..." and Cheyenne guessed correctly with, "A car!" Whitney responds positively to Cheyenne's response, and then begins again with "...And then when you have a Slinky what do you think of being?" to which Bethany answers, "A kid again." Whitney validates Bethany's response by repeating it, and continues with another leading question, "So with this car, are they targeting people who want an uptight family car?" One student responds, "No," while another responds, "Yeah," and still another responds, "No, not really." With no definitive answer, Whitney leads students step-by-step until they conclude that the purchase of the Amigo car would take people back to their childhood in the 1970s when the Slinky was their favorite toy.

There are times during the Slinky discussion when Whitney ignores comments made which are not comments she is looking for at the time. For instance, in response to the question, "What do you think of the Slinky's ad?" one student, Michael, responded, "Have you seen the *Ace Ventura* [movie] where it went down like 600 steps?" This student's question was followed with chuckles and comments from classmates regarding the movie, *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls* (1995). Jonah commented, "He actually sings that song" referencing Jim Carey's character in the movie singing the Slinky jingle as the toy goes down the outside steps of an ancient temple. Although Michael's mention of *Ace Ventura's* 600-step Slinky trick was actually a legitimate response to Whitney's

"it's things you've done with a Slinky," Whitney did not allow the response to distract from the point she wanted to pursue. Instead of acknowledging the 600-step mention, and the possible misdirection it might lead the discussion, Whitney directs students' attention to the music used in the different ads, "Listen to the music of this one" as she replays the 1970s commercial. It seems, though, that Jonah thought Michael's comment was worth repeating. Jonah talked over the other student's comments regarding the music, repeating the teacher's name, "Mrs. Frederickson," three times before Whitney acknowledged him. When she looked his way, Jonah repeated what Michael had said, "In like the *Ace Ventura*, it goes down like 600 steps and he's actually singing that song as it's going down." Whitney did not acknowledge Jonah's comment until after several other students comment about the music and other changes between the 1970s and 1980s Slinky commercials. When Whitney turns their attention to the 1990s commercial for the Amigo car, she acknowledges Jonah's contribution of the stairs comment by referencing the cars are going down the stairs (see Figure), "You mentioned the stairs, Jonah. They use the stairs."

During the whole class discussion, one of the longest student talking turns (defined as exchanges between speakers and listeners) belonged to Jonah. Whitney asked, "So even though it's a 1990s ad, and they're advertising a car, why did they make it a 1970s year in clothes?" Jonah responded, "Because they were the kids that like were playing with the Slinkys, so it's like they were the ones getting Slinkys, so now they're doing the same thing with the car." The content and length of this talking-turn demonstrates that Jonah has assumed the role of expert and is communicating ideas which he has thought through (Howe, 1992). At this comment, Whitney might have

followed up with questions about what led Jonah to make this discovery, asking him to model his thought process for his peers. She chose, instead, to continue with leading questions, perhaps to finish the time being spent solely on this commercial-viewing activity, which discussion ended one minute and twenty seconds later.

Whitney asked different types of questions, both open-ended and leading, to get her students where she wanted them to be in understanding the different techniques used by advertisers in making the three Slinky ads. Although another seventh grade teacher might have quickly given students the information, Whitney made the decision to pull her students along with leading questions. She talked about the needs of her students and her purpose for this and other lessons:

I know that class in particular is content being passive, waiting to be told what's important. I think my biggest goal with this group of kids was always to get them to try to decide what was important. I also needed to prompt them to look beyond the surface, beyond what looks "good" or "cool", and really think about choices being made by advertisers.
(Whitney Frederickson, personal email, July 16, 2011)

Throughout the class discussion, Whitney asked questions and provided prompts to get students to practice critical thinking regarding this commercial. Also, the different types of questions can be placed on several levels of Bloom's taxonomy (1956). Bloom created the taxonomy for categorizing levels of cognitive performance, from the lowest level of competence (knowledge) to the highest level (evaluation): knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Whitney asked students to describe what they saw (knowledge); think about audience and purpose (comprehension and application); compare the three commercials and techniques used within them (analysis), and make connections and see relationships between the

commercials and their own lives (synthesis). By addressing these levels of cognitive performance, Whitney helps her students develop their critical thinking skills.

With this snapshot of the study classroom, I hope to provide a detailed picture for my reader of how the teaching philosophy leads the teacher to create an atmosphere in which her students are motivated to learn. In Whitney's classroom, it seemed that Cambourne's (1995) conditions of learning and principles of engagement were met: When given the opportunity and environment of high expectations, immersion, examples, response, and dedicated work-time, students remained engaged during the post-testing period of spring which signals the school year's end. When students are given time to talk, when questions scaffold student learning, when the atmosphere is one of mutual respect and high expectations in abilities, student empowerment and learning happens. What does that empowerment and learning look like? What follows are my findings on the influence of instructional practices to student response.

How Do Instructional Practices Influence Young adults' Responses to Media?

The assumptions I make here regarding student response to this constructivist learning environment are just that, assumptions that the way students responded were due to the environment Whitney created in her room.

Young adults teach each other technical skills.

Throughout the production workshop phase of the propaganda unit, I noticed that students taught each other technical skills. The creation of commercial and print advertisements by groups allowed students to help each other with technical skills. The teacher created this social learning opportunity by designing the group projects and setting aside time to workshop the projects. Social learning opportunities such as the

group work and workshop times are supported by the work of Vygotsky (1986) and others. When students teach each other technical skills, not only are they sharing their expertise, but they are being empowered as well.

Help with technical issues was offered and solicited by students. When fellow students could not solve the problem, students sought the teacher's assistance. At one point a student called out, "Ms. Fredericks? Is there a way to split a picture in half?" and before teacher Whitney Fredericks could respond, another student answered, "Yes, crop it," and then walked over to where the first student's group was clustered around a computer to show them how to crop a picture.

Scott and Michael engaged in joint technical problem-solving to get the internet connected and load the CD with filmed takes of their commercial into a movie-editing application. They worked together to solve problems they were experiencing (note: the following excerpt contains the voices of both):

we need to edit it ... you don't know how to delete stuff? ... don't have to rip it ... we want to get rid of all the ones we don't want ... go to cut ... no don't go to cut, go to delete ... no not delete ...check it out, here it is in slow motion ... I can't do that, I can't figure it out ... go to the last one ... I think this is perfect ... (Adrenolaid, group work session, April 2010).

Students did not only ask members of their group for technical assistance. They also asked students outside their group for help. For instance, Michael sought technical help from classmates outside his group, asking one student how to make a bit of their movie run in slow motion. Jonah was another student who frequently asked other students for technical help. He watched what other groups did with their videos and then asked how they were accomplishing the different moves on the computer programs.

When the Bieberlicious group gathered at a computer to select images to create their print advertisement, Bethany typed at the computer and sitting beside her, Tessa gave helpful hints:

...first you need to highlight ... all you have to do is click down there, right there ... you could go to Paint and do that ... you have to do that as a new Microsoft document or it's going to wipe that out ... you got to go up to edit, copy, you got to highlight it, copy, cut, there you go... (Bieberlicious, group work session, April 2010).

Tessa also problem-solved an equipment issue, noticing a cord was unplugged and plugging it back in. An example of a gap in the levels of technical skills, or of eagerness to use computer applications, was when Bethany wanted to get off of the computer and write the script of their commercial by hand while Tessa asked, "Can't we just write it on there [the computer]?" Evidently, Tessa felt that typing the script on the computer would be much faster than writing it by hand, possibly because Tessa's keyboarding skills were more advanced than Bethany's. This may be likely because through other comments she made during class discussions, it seems that Tessa spends much time on computers outside of school.

Listening to the conversations, I noticed other examples of gaps in computer skill proficiency amongst the students. During the unit I was unable to observe the class in the computer lab, only while working with the old computer equipment in their classroom. Mary surprised me with her skill level because her teacher describes her as a student who is extremely shy and, I noticed, slow and whisper-quiet in responding to questions or instructions. But Mary wrote in a journal entry about how frustrating ads on YouTube can be when you are watching a movie with subtitles and the ad covers the subtitles. With the notion that she watches videos online, some of which have subtitles, and with

computer skills she brought to the work of her Arg-Off group sessions, Mary appears to be a student who spends much time out of school developing computer literacy skills.

It seems to me that the laid-back, somewhat noisy atmosphere of the production workshop, allowed students to readily share their technical expertise with each other. This may not be likely to occur in a quiet, teacher-structured and teacher-managed environment, where the teacher is seen as the expert in the room. In this classroom, all students are experts and have something of importance to share with others.

Young adults digress while writing about commercials and print ads, but return to initial important points.

Workshop was not a free-for-all, though, as the teacher at times asked students to spend time often at the beginning of class, and sometimes throughout, to take a few minutes to write. At times, she offered a prompt, and other times, she offered a dedicated time to write. When Whitney provided a prompt, students responded to it, and then several students went on to write on personal topics, which Britton, et al. (1975/1979) refers to as "expressive writing," written to please or satisfy the writer. What was interesting about three of these personal-topic-writing students is they actually returned to the original prompt after they had digressed. Elbow (1998) said about digression that "If you allow yourself to get genuinely off the subject you can see it differently when you come back" (p. 34). Thinking about this idea, I thought I would look closer at the three girls' writings.

Cheyenne, whom I described in detail earlier in this chapter, wrote first to the teacher's prompt and then about personal events occurring on the farm and bucket calves before returning to the prompt. Another student who digressed with her writing was

Kelsey. Her journal entry on March 31 began addressing the prompt and then digressed.

Kelsey then drew a line under the personal topics and returned to the prompt with a perceptive thought:

I wonder why some of these commercials have something in it that has nothing to do with it. As I look back at my comments I laugh. I don't know what else to write.

So how is it going? I'm sad! What are you doing this weekend? I'm going to tan, ride the go-cart.

I just thought of something. I thought it was smart when they used famous people to get people to buy their [iPod] player. (Kelsey, journal entry, March 31, 2010)

In Kelsey's case, the digression added a different view on what she thought about commercials. The fluent-writing assignment kept her writing and the digression into personal topics may have allowed her mind a chance to warm-up to the original subject. Then when she returned to the teacher's prompt, Kelsey was able to add a different idea to answer the prompt. It is interesting to note, too, that Kelsey obviously re-read "As I look back at my comments," using the re-reading itself as a prompt for something new to write. This goes along with Britton's idea of writing to hold a thought (Britton, et al., 1975/1979) and Paivio's dual-coding where texts prompt more texts (Paivio, 1986 and 2006).

A third student with an example of digression is Bailee, whose journal entries are entertaining to read and conversational, and her writing voice has an energy that draws in the reader. Bailee uses capitalization and punctuation in different ways and incorporates texting script into her writing. Her writing identity does not match her classroom identity. In class she is shy, loses her thought and stutters (although the stuttering seems to be for attention) when called on, but is more than ready to continue talking to her neighbors

while others are talking. In her April 1 journal entry, she is responding to the teacher's prompt of "watch this commercial and write what you think about it." The teacher also played music softly in the room during this particular writing time.

This week we've been talking about commercials and some I was like Wth? No, not the cuss word - heck. Gosh! haha anyway, but its like the one today. It showed soldiers walking and people ~~walking~~ clapping for them...I thought it might be something for the navy but it was for BEER. WHAT.THE.HECK. It doesn't even make se - Oh, I love this SONG!! Fireflies! God I love Owl City!! *laughing face* they r awesome!! K, sorry, Anyway ... oh, and the one with the baby and the playstation - that one scared me crapless. Its eyes just like, pop open, and then it starts laughing, then crying, then the tears are lick sucked back into its eyes. Its like OMG, WTF?!?!?! (Bailee, journal entry, April 1, 2010)

In this entry Bailee begins to address the prompt, then is sidetracked by her almost inappropriate "Wth?" which she then feels she needs to explain that she is not cussing because she is using the word "heck." Bailee returns to the prompt for a short two and a half sentences, the half sentence being interrupted mid-word when she evidently realizes what song the teacher is playing during writing time. Bailee writes glowing remarks about the song and band, then apologizes to the reader and tries to return to the prompt. By this time her attention is still on a commercial, but not the commercial of the original prompt. The first digression may have her returning with a different view on the original subject, but the second digression moved her beyond that prompt, or maybe totally away from that prompt, to a similar topic of discussion, another commercial. (I wonder if she can explain away a cuss word in the final WTF?)

It appears from these examples, that digression may not be a bad thing for students to engage in while fluent-writing. Digression seems to give students a chance to rest or warm-up to a prompt so that when returning to the original subject, the writer may see it differently. The examples also show evidence that while writing the

students are aware of their audience. They address their reader with questions, use a conversational tone, and write about rural topics of interest to their teacher and classmates. This most likely comes from knowing their teacher will read and respond to their journal entries, a routine in place since the beginning of the school year. Choosing to include this fluent-writing routine as part of a workshop, was an instructional strategy which Whitney chose to create the learning environment she wished for her students.

Young adults use talk to explore and clarify meaning as they reflect on others' feedback and response.

Talking about ads some helped me to understand them. (Kenzie, student journal, April 2010)

Much conversation occurred during the unit, especially during the production of commercials workshop. Cambourne (1995), Moffett (1983), and Elbow (1998) provide a framework for analyzing the talk in the room. Conversations between teacher and students and small groups of students, allowed for learning as Cambourne (1995) outlined: exploration of ideas, application of ideas, and transformation of those ideas per feedback received. When listening to the talk of these seventh graders during this unit, I found many examples of students exploring, reflecting and clarifying their ideas as they built on each other's words through Moffett's borrowing, recombining, adding, and elaborating, and Elbow's restructuring per feedback received. Moffett (1968/1983) calls conversation a "verbal collaboration" where "each party borrows words and phrases and structures from the other, recombines them, adds to them, and elaborates them" (p. 72-73). Paired with this verbal collaboration is the "cognitive collaboration" which is his phrase for the "meeting and fusion of minds" (p. 73). Moffett believes that in

conversations where thinking is involved (as contrasted to ceremony and commands which do not encourage thought), dialogue is the major means to develop thought and language (p. 73). Peter Elbow (1998) agrees that when a person is trying to figure out something, there is nothing better than talking to another person. Explaining how brainstorming works, Elbow writes, "I say something. You give a response and it constitutes some restructuring or reorienting of what I said. Then *I* see something new on the basis of your restructuring and so I, in turn, can restructure what I first said" (p. 49-50, italics his). I share here several examples of the verbal collaboration of students.

The first two examples come from the final interview of the group whose product was Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches. This interview was recorded after the group completed their advertisements for birth control patches. In their projects, they were influenced by several celebrities while creating their commercials, including songs by Justin Bieber (Bieber is one of Kelsey's favorite singers), rapper Eminem, and singer Huey, and the "Octomom" which is a media-created label used for Nadya Suleman, the single mother of fourteen children, including octuplets conceived through in vitro fertilization and born in 2009. I have highlighted the borrowed and repeated words and phrases and discuss these in the paragraph following this excerpt.

Catherine: well someone just thought of **Octomom**
Kelsey: well we wanted **Octomom** and
Catherine: Ms. Fredericks started, she was like telling us ideas
Kelsey: basically that, or **anger management**
Catherine: like **anger management** or birth **control** because you know she has eight babies
Kelsey: **I was thinking**
Catherine: and then like the parental **control**
Kelsey: well **I was thinking** maybe we could have done **something with alcohol** like **something alcohol** or **crack** because you can tell she's kinda on **crack** or something to get injections like that, it's kinda weird

(Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches, interview, May 2010)

In this excerpt, "Octomom," first said by Catherine, is repeated by Kelsey, who also corrects what Catherine said by saying "wanted" instead of "just thought of." "Anger management" said by Kelsey is repeated by Catherine who then adds "and birth control." At a slight pause, Kelsey says "I was thinking" during which Catherine repeats her word "control" and combines it with "parental," restructuring the idea by adding a different word to "control." Kelsey repeats her own phrase, "I was thinking" and she adds "something with alcohol." At this point, it is interesting to note that Kelsey immediately repeats "something alcohol," possibly because she wants to keep her place or turn in the talking and continue her thinking without Catherine's interruption. Kelsey does a similar move with "crack," which then becomes "crack or something." In this instance, Kelsey is continuing with Catherine's "parental control" idea. Kelsey is saying the Octomom must have been on something like alcohol or crack to have eight embryos implanted, and that this is the reason behind the need for parental control as an aide for parents to be able to control themselves. Kelsey is elaborating on Catherine's idea, although it is unclear from this exchange how the anger management idea got between Octomom and birth control/parental control. Perhaps the students remember news stories showing Ms. Suleman losing her patience with reporters, but again, it is unclear how Catherine and Kelsey made the Octomom-anger connection.

In the following excerpt from the same group's interview, I noted how Catherine and Kelsey build off of each other's phrases to elaborate ideas in this "meeting and fusion" of two minds (Moffett, 1968/1983, p. 73). My question to them at this point was "What was easy, what was difficult, in making your commercials":

Transcription of interview	My interpretation
Catherine: I think the most difficult part was probably trying to find the right music and the different, changing the Justin Bieber song	
Kelsey: and then it turns out we just kinda yelled over him	K is elaborating on C's mention of Justin Bieber's song
Catherine: yeah	
Kelsey: which was really difficult. I got to admit I kept wanting to say ...	K is borrowing C's word "difficult" (which C had borrowed from my question), agreeing, adding detail of what she kept wanting to do with the lyrics
Catherine: the words to the song	C is interrupting and finishing K's thought, knowing what K was going to say
Kelsey: yeah, instead of "the eggs went pop, pop" I was like ... now all I really know about the song is like the version we made up and ...	K is agreeing with C's completion of her thought, then elaborating with detail of words they replaced the phrase "heart went knock knock" in Bieber's song with "the eggs went pop pop"
(laughter from both)	
Kelsey: ... I can't get it out of my head	
Catherine: She kept singing it yesterday in music	C is agreeing with and elaborating K's thought with the detail of how she knows K can't get the song out of her head

(Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches, interview, May 2010)

The borrowing of words and restructuring ideas happened outside of the group work as well. One day I observed Amy's group revising their filmed commercial in another classroom. Across the room, Cheyenne and Amy had separated themselves from the group (Cheyenne actually was a member of a different group), and were involved in a very animated conversation as they danced and giggled. During their conversation, they brainstormed ideas for additional commercials for Cheyenne's and Jonah's product,

incorporating and modifying each other's ideas as they talked. This is a bit of Cheyenne's and Amy's conversation (Note: Cheyenne's and Jonah's product was ScarAway, a product which fades scars and which the teacher and researcher discovered later was a real product, but which we did not know at the time):

Cheyenne: Amy, I know what we can do ... Jonah and I were thinking about doing another skit thing. We could be dancing and somebody can cut one of us with their stiletto high heel
Amy: and we could use ScarAway to put our bodies back together
Both: yeah-yeah
Cheyenne: how are we supposed to cut each other in half
Amy: we're not going to cut each other in half, we're going to cut your hand off and we're going to
Cheyenne: but how are you supposed to get
Amy: pull it in your sleeve
Cheyenne: no, we should go like (gesture) oh my goodness, we might want to practice the skit, because we're going to do a new one
Amy: you guys don't have time to do a new one
Cheyenne: yeah we do
(Bieberlicious, work session, April 2010)

This was a rapid-fire exchange between these two students. It was interesting for me to see Cheyenne so animated and talkative in her conversation with Amy because in the regular classroom Cheyenne was typically quiet, attended to her work, and rarely smiled. But in this other classroom, Cheyenne was also attending to work, even though it resembled playing, by brainstorming ideas with Amy at an amazing pace.

In comparison, when Cheyenne and her partner, Jonah, worked together on their script writing, they also brainstormed and negotiated well, but in a more controlled manner. A portion of the transcript from Cheyenne and Jonah's work session is shown below. Cheyenne is sitting at the computer typing the script for a commercial while Jonah sits beside her and gives ideas. The commercial plotline features two children fighting over a toy, when one child hits the other with a knife (!). The injured child yells

for Mom who immediately applies the product ScarAway to the cut. At this point in their conversation, Cheyenne and Jonah are deciding what toy to use and how the children should talk during the commercial. Cheyenne prompts Jonah with questions, a move that helps focus Jonah on the task and that asks for agreement or modifications:

Cheyenne: what toy are we going to have?
Jonah: we'll have um, that uh, well they're little kids right?
Cheyenne: yeah
Jonah: ok little kids like pretty much anything, so we just need to decide on something
Cheyenne: how about a racecar? I think we can write cars
Jonah: that cars, racecar ...
Cheyenne: car
Jonah: because when they say "it is mine" change that to say "the racecar is mine"
Cheyenne: no, like they usually say "no, it's mine"
Jonah: well
Cheyenne: see usually they don't say
Jonah: yeah but that's the start of the commercial
Cheyenne: yeah but we're going to have a real car in their hands and they're like fighting over it
(ScarAway, work session, April 2010)

Cheyenne and Jonah both voiced their ideas and backed them up when questioned. Cheyenne realized that the phrase "The racecar is mine" would not sound natural, while Justin wanted to be sure the viewing audience knew immediately at the beginning of the commercial what toy the children were fighting over. This conversation between Cheyenne and Jonah was very controlled versus the conversation between Cheyenne and Amy which was a rapid-fire exchange. Nevertheless, both conversations achieved work.

In their final group interview, Cheyenne and Jonah were also thinking of additional skit ideas. I once again noted how they built on each other's ideas, borrowing and modifying them. Here is an excerpt from that interview:

Cheyenne: I think like we could I just now thought of this we could like redo our parody it's like if both of us like this Justin Bieber and Harry Potter are actually fighting and they could be like saying Head-on or Scar-Away while they're fighting and then randomly they say you broke my heart or like something you broke her heart or something and he's like you scratched me for life or something

Jonah: no okay okay I mean like it should be like Justin Bieber says to Harry Potter something like that and Harry Potter could say you scarred me for life as soon as I saw you, yeah, and just like (inaudible) or something like that
(ScarAway, interview, May 2010)

I noted, too, the pleasant manners they had during the entire interview of not interrupting each other, allowing each other to have long turns to talk. These long talking turns did not happen in interviews of the other groups.

By using these excerpts from student conversations, I hope to demonstrate that talk is a necessary part of not only this unit, but in many learning situations where language is involved. By conversing with others, we practice our ideas, borrow ideas from others, recombine or modify our ideas, and expand our thinking. Talk is the tool needed in classrooms to encourage the development of thinking and language. Whitney arranged her production workshop to include opportunities for talk, as well as an environment where play-acting and music could thrive.

Young adults create and compose through play and song.

When given time in a workshop environment, students engage in a variety of activities, ranging from quiet writing at desks to the noisier activities of playing and singing. Play can give students a reprieve from paperwork and can provide necessary brainstorming for composing a script and for creating solutions to problems. Music is also a reprieve from quiet schoolwork in that it stimulates the creative part of the brain "before the more analytic focus on form and convention takes over" (Moffett, 1976/1983,

p. 189). Music can also "free up bodily response, stimulate pantomime, and brew poetry" as it stimulates the creative brain hemisphere (Moffett, 1976/1983, p. 189). What follows are several examples of how Whitney's instructional strategies enabled students to create their commercials as they engaged in playing and singing during production workshop.

Creating through play.

Play is sometimes considered a rehearsal, much like the rehearsals of a stage performance, where an activity or way of acting or responding is practiced before it becomes part of a person's or character's repertoire. Writing that social skills are necessary for full involvement in today's participatory culture, Jenkins, et al. (2006), note that in play, people experiment with their surroundings as a form of problem-solving. Play also utilizes improvisation, which allows people to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of discovery (Jenkins, et al., 2006). The word "improvise" comes from the Latin word *improvisus* meaning "unforeseen." To improvise means "(t)o invent, compose, or perform with little or no preparation ... (t)o play or sing (music) extemporaneously ... (t)o make or provide from available materials ..." (www.thefreedictionary.com). Play is also a digression from work, and as noted above relating to digression in writing, Elbow (1998) believes, "If you allow yourself to get genuinely off the subject you can see it differently when you come back" (p. 34). The following examples show students getting "off the subject" while also getting their work done. Whitney's classroom atmosphere invited students to play with ideas.

Through play, the Arg-Off group found the plot for their commercial. In the group's interview, it was not surprising for this researcher to find that Mary was not involved in the initial play fighting, because Mary is a quiet, shy girl. Bailee and Iris, on

the other hand, are loud characters in the class. Bailee, assuming the role of leader, talked more in the group's interview and explained how they arrived at the idea for their commercial. Their product is called Arg-Off, a drink that changes an angry temperament to a friendly, loving one:

Bailee: Well, we kinda got the idea because Iris, like she was, we were like
play fighting and

Iris: We just kinda like thought "hey we could do this in our
commercial"

(laugh, whisper)

JW So you were just play fighting in class one day?

Bailee: Yeah

Iris: Yeah

Mary: Yeah, well, they started it, and then I kinda joined in

Bailee: We just kinda brought it together

(Arg-Off, interview, May 2010)

Listening to recordings from Arg-Off work sessions, it was interesting to hear quiet, shy Mary exerting herself trying to get this group to focus, saying several times, "Listen, we just need to work," and in response to Bailee's playful, "Oh my god, really?!!" Mary said, "Quit the sarcasm." One result of this group often playing was, when they filmed their commercial, they only needed two takes to have a satisfactory final commercial, while other groups took sometimes dozens of film takes and ended up needing to splice several together to complete their commercial. Other groups, especially the Bieberlicious group, revised their scripts as they filmed and reviewed each take before continuing. However, the Arg-Off group did their revising during their play / rehearsal time and before picking up the camera and filming. Also, through play, this group decided that Iris made a better "angry person" than Bailee, and they switched parts when they filmed. Because they were allowed time to play, this group discovered the

plot for their commercial, fine-tuned their performance through many rehearsals, and determined an actor exchange would improve their final commercial.

When Whitney asked students to create their own public service announcement in response to a gossiping problem happening at the time in the junior high, Kelsey and Catherine, members of a group of four, laughed, sang, talked, and brainstormed with much animation. These two were so involved in creating a poster which shared their message, that when another member of their group, apparently fearful that the noisy group would fail at the poster-creating assignment, reminded them, "But this is for a grade!" Kelsey and Catherine sobered for a moment, and Kelsey asked with disbelief, "It is?" It seems to this researcher that the task assigned by the teacher, and the time and workshop atmosphere provided by her, allowed Kelsey and Catherine to become actively and playfully engaged in a creative activity, much like Csikszentmihalyi's flow concept (1990), so much so that they ceased to consider it "work" that would be graded.

According to Csikszentmihalyi, the conditions of flow include choice and control; social interaction and involvement; a sense of developing competence; active assistance to meet new challenges; and connection to high levels of personal relevance and social significance (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Wilhelm, 2002). In the above example, Kelsey and Catherine had choice and control over what message their poster would convey; they were interacting socially; they were competent they could achieve the goal which their teacher had set and also knew their teacher was nearby for assistance; and the purpose of the public service announcements -- to highlight damage caused by gossip -- was relevant to their personal and social lives. By designing this activity, Whitney brought the enjoyment of a flow activity to her students.

The Adrenolaid group of Scott and Michael rarely seemed to be seriously working when I observed them. They were often off-task, visiting, flirting, laughing, and singing. Yet, when I listened to recordings of their work sessions, I noted - with surprise - these partners actually got quite a bit of work done. Mostly it was Michael doing the work, trying to pull Scott back into a working mode, but, nonetheless, work got done. When Scott was on-task, he and Michael brainstormed the bully and fight scenes for their commercial, with Michael drawing a diagram of where the action would occur and writing the script. Scott prepared props by creating a new label for a Gatorade bottle to read "Adrenolaid" and coloring red a paper towel "Sham-wow" for the parody commercial. What initially appeared to me as unfocused nonsense, was actually this group's way of working together to complete their tasks.

In the above examples, time provided by Whitney during production workshop and an easy, low-stress, playful atmosphere, gave students the opportunity to brainstorm and create suitable solutions to tasks. This time also allowed students to digress from typical work assignments, and to later return with different visions. In addition to a playful environment, the production workshop also included much music which also provided students opportunities to create, as indicated in the discussion and examples in the next section.

Creating through music.

When considering that improvisation, found in play-acting, also includes "inventing variations on a melody or creating new melodies" to a known song (www.thefreedictionary.com), it is not unusual that the seventh grade students often broke into song. Play and music seem to fit together. During production workshop one

day, Michael switched out the word "you" and replaced it with "Scott" as he sang the commercial jingle, "What would Scott do for a Klondike bar?" Scott's singing was caught on the recorder one time as he sang a Sunday school song, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine." A few seventh graders substituted words, sometimes nonsense words, to a tune: "potato-tomato-mm-mm-bo-ladle, I'm going to knock you, Cate, on your potato." They also made up their own tune, as when Michael sang, "Scott is a hobo" and "You really want to kiss me!"

This spontaneous singing caught my attention as I collected and worked with the data. What interested me most was why the students so easily and naturally broke into song throughout the production portion of the unit? At these points in the students' creative process, when I was not so interested in their critical analysis of commercial messages, I wondered how and why this spontaneous music happened. I assume these instances happened due to some stimulus word or image. But why song, as I wrote in my journal:

Does music bring order to a chaotic mind?
Why do these kids sing so much? Do all kids sing this much? How does music become such a large part of children's lives? Is it the music education from school? How does it get to be ingrained in students to sing at the mention of a word? Triggers an aesthetic response, connects in the brain with other experiences ... interesting (researcher journal, April 2010)

Returning to research literature, I found that just as images, of printed words or in the form of drawings or photographs, invoke words, and spoken words invoke images (Paivio, 2006), so, too, does a melody invoke words, and words, a melody. Moffett (1976/1983) refers to this when he writes, "Musical phrasing inspires verbal phrasing," and further explains that "Words fit a tune, but a tune can [also] draw forth words" (p. 189). It seems to me that the classroom atmosphere created by Whitney, who is a

musician herself and who often breaks out in song during class, made the classroom environment a place where students felt comfortable and confident to break into song. The singing may be the result of students watching dozens of commercials during class time, all of which contained music, and also outside of school, the students' home environments exposed them to numerous commercials daily. A portion of the stimulus for spontaneous singing might also have come from the two groups involved in changing the lyrics of songs for their own commercials: "Summer Nights" from the movie, *Grease*, was used by the Bieberlicious group; and songs by Justin Bieber, Huey, and Eminem were modified by the Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches group. The songs were played and revisions sung repeatedly by these groups.

Howard Gardner (1983), a researcher in cognition who outlined a theory of multiple intelligences, recognized music as an intellectual ability, describing it as an intelligence "that unites affective and cognitive competencies" (quoting Gardner, John-Steiner, 1997, p. 141). Moffett and Gardner both agree that music has the ability to cross the hemispheres of the brain, a connection which will be an essential aptitude as our world resides in the Information Age created by expanding technology, per Daniel Pink (2006). Pink writes of the need for the aptitude of "symphony" because our modern world's "glut of options and stimuli can be so overwhelming that those with the ability to see the big picture -- to sort out what really matters -- have a decided advantage in their pursuit of personal well-being" (p. 131). Pink also feels that play will be an essential skill for the Information Age. Moffett explains that songs "merge the melodies and rhythms of words with those of music and steep the children in the heady elixirs that are the primitive fountainhead of all expression" (Moffett, 1976/1983, p. 189). These "heady

elixirs" created by joining the two mediums of language and music, enhance each other and hold much interest for students. Songs also create a "metrical structure," or a rhythmic base, upon which "language can be stretched and very pleurably measured" (p. 189). Moffett believes this metrical structure provides children a frame to create their own material and this rhythmic base may trigger that material. In the present case study, songs by rapper Eminem and from the movie, *Grease* (1978), as well as several Justin Bieber songs, provide a metrical structure for music for students' commercials. The Fun Fun Baby Birth Control Patches group modified Eminem's "My Name Is" song to work for their commercial:

Fun, Fun Baby Birth Control Patches lyrics

Eminem's original lyrics to "My Name Is"

Hi! My name is.. (what?) My name is..
(who?)

Hi! My name is.. (what?) My name is..
(who?)

My name is.. [scratches] OCTOMOM

My name is.. [scratches] Slim Shady

Hi! My name is.. (huh?) My name is.. (what?)

Hi! My name is.. (huh?) My name is.. (what?)

My name is.. [scratches] OCTOMOM

My name is.. [scratches] Slim Shady

The Bieberlicious group used the song "Summer Nights" from the movie *Grease* as their beginning point. This song had the group not only substituting their own words into the original song, but re-singing previously written lines as they changed words and added lines. This revision technique of re-singing or re-reading newly created lyrics, is discussed below. I coded the finding as "revising without direct instruction" because

their teacher never specifically dictated to this group how they might revise their song. This was just something the group did automatically.

Before I move on to the next findings, a recap of the play and music findings is in order. In a classroom learning environment where play and music are used and encouraged, students are freed from the anxiety of remaining quiet, and are able to create and compose through rehearsal and through metrical structures. Play allows students to practice ideas and receive feedback. Play allows students to wander and return. Music brings a rhythm capable of being modified. As a result of being able to present ideas, reflect on feedback, and modify ideas as desired, both play and music help develop thinking and language.

Young adults revise their work without direct instruction.

I asked students during the end-of-project group interviews to share how they decided to make changes to their commercials and print advertisements. None of the groups suggested that the teacher directed them to revise their work. Instead, students told me they revised because they had time to act out their scripts, to research, and to write songs and scripts. Several said they used the feedback from their peers, inside and outside their groups, to consider what to revise. Others compared their commercials to examples of commercials shown and discussed in class and advertisements they viewed at home to see what changes were necessary to their projects. Students also had control of the digital video camera and were able to review their film takes immediately to determine what acts needed to be re-filmed. Janet Emig (1971) in her study of the composing processes of twelfth grade students concluded that while students do not voluntarily revise "school-sponsored" writing where the teacher is the audience, they *do*

readily revise "self-sponsored" writing where their peers are their audience (p. 98).

Because Whitney gave students a constructivist learning environment in which they could "initiate learning, generate curriculum, direct their own behavior and evaluate their own efforts" (Watson, 1996, p. 188), and her students had the opportunity to choose products and mediums for their final projects, her students were able to determine what needed to be revised and to do it. What follows are examples of these revision strategies in use.

Revise when given time.

As mentioned earlier, the Arg-Off group utilized time in the production workshop to play-fight and during this play, found the plot for their commercial script and found that Iris made the better "angry" person. This group may have gotten stuck with their script-writing if their teacher had not scheduled time for this during the production workshop. In addition to writing a script and finding actors, groups made props, reviewed stage directions with actors who were not members of their group, and practiced the commercials, although much of this practice, other than the Arg-Off group, occurred during the filming. I asked the groups how their ideas came together. The Bieberlicious group said they wrote their ideas down and then decided which ones would be "good" for their product. They would then "do something and we would change it up after we'd already done it so that we could see" through "trial and error" if the idea would work (Bieberlicious, interview, May 2010). They indicated they "went through a lot of ideas trying to get everything to work" and deciding how they "were going to present it" (Bieberlicious, interview, May 2010).

Whitney gave the students the responsibility to set their own goals and allotted them time to accomplish those goals. A few students worked well throughout class time, while others did not always. I was impressed one day at the focus the Bieberlicious group gave while rewriting a song. The five members of the group took advantage of an entire class period to rewrite the lyrics to the song "Summer Nights" from the movie, *Grease* (1978), for inclusion in their commercial. Whenever they changed a word or phrase in the lyrics, the group sang from the beginning of the stanza to decide whether the change worked with the tune. Bethany said, "We were changing the song. We changed a lot of the song as we were singing it" (Bieberlicious, interview, April 2010). Not only did the group sing each revision, but this re-singing, or singing to join the new parts to old, was crucial to their commercial script-writing. Their singing produced more words which in turn produced more singing, similar to Paivio's (2006) dual coding theory of words and images producing more words and images. James Britton (1975/1979) also believes that words written on a page act as a stimulus to "*continuing* [writing] ... and not primarily as a stimulus to *re-writing*" (p. 148, italics his). Britton shares a story of how one day when he and his colleagues were trying to write with a worn out pen, they grew frustrated because "we just could not hold the thread of an argument or the shape of a poem in our minds, because scanning back was impossible" (p. 35). Scanning back on their written song, as well as scanning back through the melody to sing the revised lyrics, helped this group modify the "Summer Nights" song to work for their commercial. Britton says scanning back is necessary to "to help the writer keep overall control of what he is doing, as well as to make corrections and improvements" (p. 35). What follows is a description of the Bieberlicious group's intense concentration throughout class on the day

they revised their song, an occurrence which may not have happened if Whitney had kept a more rigid work schedule for the day.

Lyrics to "Summer Nights" from *Grease* (excerpt)

[Danny]Summer lovin' had me a blast
[Sandy]Summer lovin' happened so fast
[Danny]I met a girl crazy for me
[Sandy]Met a boy cute as can be
[Both]Summer days driftin' away, to uh-oh those summer nights

[Everyone]Uh Well-a well-a well-a huh

[Thunderbirds]Tell me more, tell me more
[Doody]Did you get very far?
[Pink Ladies]Tell me more, tell me more
[Marty]Like does he have a car?

The group worked well together for the entire period. They listened to each other's suggestions. For example, one group member saying, "I think it makes more sense 'Bieberlicious, drifting away'" was followed by another student saying, "That's what I think" as well as the group singing the new revision. Addressing Bethany at one point, one student said, "Just to let you know, I changed this" to which Bethany and another student approved by saying, "Okay." The group tried singing a new suggestion of "Hey, how about you just go 'a boy, a boy, cute as can be'" and all agreed to the change. The version of the song lyrics the group printed, had the names of different characters in the movie, but these names were names which could stand for a boy or a girl. The group members used their knowledge of the plot and characters of the movie *Grease* to determine whether it was a boy or a girl singing certain lines. This would make a difference in their commercial because their two main male characters sang solo parts,

and they needed to keep the boy and girl characters straight in the song and script. In the following exchange, several of the five girls in the group spoke, and, although I could not differentiate between the particular students, each line below represents a change in the student speaking:

- Sonny's a guy's name
 - and this one is a guy
 - ...
 - this is the girl's part, if Sonny's a guy's name. Rizzo is a girl's name, and so is Marty, Kenickie is a guy's name, and Dan is a girl's name
 - yeah
 - that's a guy
 - I think that's a girl
- (Bieberlicious, work session, April 2010)

The group eventually worked out that "Danny" was actually the main male character in the story. Right before the bell rang, the group seemed satisfied with their finished re-writing of the lyrics, but time had run out to record it. They made plans with Whitney for the following day to meet before school in Whitney's classroom to record it. The Bieberlicious group was not the only group who revised a song's lyrics. The Fun, Fun Baby Birth Control Patches group also revised one of singer Justin Bieber's songs. However, the Fun, Fun group opted to turn off their recorder during the re-writing process which made it impossible for this researcher to follow their revision process related to the song.

The point of having the Bieberlicious example here is to show not only the intense concentration these young adults were able to maintain for more than twenty minutes, but also the revision process the group members went through. When they added or changed the words, the group sang the lyrics from the beginning through the new revision in order to check the appropriateness of the change or addition. This "sing-compose-sing-revise-

sing" method of revision mirrors revision in typical written composition of "write-read-revise-read." In the case of the Bieberlicious lyrics-writing, Whitney did not specifically assign the group the work of revision. Instead, without this direct instruction from their teacher, the group revised their own work, practicing to make sure their writing sounded appropriate for their purpose (selling a product) and audience (their classmates).

Time that Whitney dedicated to student-managed work goals during the production workshop, also allowed opportunities for internet research and talking with students outside groups. All groups took at least a small amount of time to research the internet, mainly for images to use in their print advertisements. While on the internet looking for images and names of birth control patches, Catherine and Kelsey came across birth control for men. "I discovered that there are actually birth control patches and injections and things and I didn't know that," Catherine said (Fun, Fun Baby Birth Control Patches, interview, May 2010). Kelsey replied that while she knew about the birth control patches, she "didn't know there were some for men." They included a bit of this research in their print ad: "Now available for men." By researching on the internet, these girls learned information that was not only useful for their commercial project, but helpful information for their personal lives as well.

The student-structured portion of the production workshop provided time for group members to brainstorm, research, create, and compose not only with members of their group, but time to talk with members of other groups as well. The singer, Justin Bieber, was popular that spring, and with several pictures of him posted about the room and in student lockers, and conversations daily about him and his songs, three groups decided to use him or his songs in their commercials. Bethany spoke about not liking

Justin Bieber "that much" and thought about making fun of him. She decided to talk with Kelsey, because she knew Kelsey really liked Bieber and his music. Kelsey was not in Bethany's group. Bethany and Kelsey brainstormed an idea about using Justin Bieber and a cologne. Kelsey's group decided to use the Octomom/birth control idea and modify some Bieber songs for their commercial. At that point, Bethany brought the Bieber/cologne idea to her own group, and they ended up using it as their product. The collaborative atmosphere of the classroom allowed cross-group idea exchanges. This atmosphere continued during the focus group activities where groups presented their ideas to the rest of the class and the class provided feedback on positives and negatives they thought the projects contained. Several students referred to these comments as helpful in revising their commercials, a finding I elaborate on below.

Revise when reflecting on peer comments.

Students used peer comments from focus group activities to revise or consider revising their final projects. Although they didn't always appreciate the suggestions, several groups chose to consider peer comments when revising their projects. Both the Bieberlicious and Adrenolaid groups said comments from the class during focus groups helped give them ideas for revising. In this next excerpt, Amy, Bethany, and Tessa of the Bieberlicious group are talking about a classmate's comment made during the final focus group session. Because I had observed the filming of this commercial, I remembered Amy was the person who came up with the "chicks dig it" idea, and I wanted to hear her talk about how she thought to include it. Bethany definitely acted as the leader in the entire group interview as well as throughout the creation of the commercials. Amy was often on the edge of the group, but took over the filming responsibilities:

Bethany: *(reading from the focus group sheet)*
 "chicks dig it I like, the thing at the end." I actually like it, too. It was pretty funny to do that.

Tessa: It was.

Amy: "chicks dig it, we know"

Bethany: but

Researcher: Yeah, how'd you come up with that?

Bethany: I don't know. We were just going through ideas and everything.

Researcher: Did you come up with that Amy?

Bethany: Deidre or Amy, yeah, one of them.

Tessa: It was Amy.

Amy: It was. What I said is that they should come up there like 'cause Tessa was the Butler, so Justin Bieber and his friend, Ryan, would go up, and when the girls walked into the class, then they'd go "chicks dig it, we know" and then they were supposed to, then the two girls were supposed to come back out and say "are you coming?" and then they'd go in.

Researcher: Where'd you get that idea?

Amy: I don't know.

(laughter)

Bethany: Yeah, we were just going through brainstorming and everything.

Amy: *(quietly but so researcher can hear)* In my head.
 (final group interview, Bieberlicious, May 2010)

Peer comments whether verbal or written often led to revisions of final projects.

A comment made by a classmate on the focus group comment form had Michael and Scott revising their script.

Scott: Hmm, almost down to the bottom it says "funny like retakes put those in maybe little more making fun of"

Michael: So this person liked the retakes.

Scott: Yeah. Like we should have a longer chase scene like whenever you tackle me, I get up and start running again, and you guys -

Michael: I know what we can do!

Scott: What?

Michael: We could like chase you around that tree by the soccer goal and you can put those one weird clothes on that you had for Desirae's video and then you can walk out -

Scott: We could do a sword fight!

(laughter)

Scott: You have to tackle me, then we all pull out swords and then we'll be like "en garde!"
Michael: That has nothing to do with the product.
Scott: Then like you guys get me and I drink the Adrenolaid -
Michael: Hey no! You're the bully!
Scott: Oh yeah. Then I turn into the nerd, and then I turn into a bully at the end.
(Adrenolaid, interview, May 2010)

Some students did not agree with comments made about their projects and at times felt attacked by any critique of their work. Two members of the PrettyOn group told me the peer comments on the focus group sheets were "like a smack in the face pretty much" (Tamara in researcher journal, May 2010) and although it felt like insults or attacks to her, Desirae said "it's not new to me" (Desirae in researcher journal, May 2010). These two students did not seem to consider revision based on peer comments.

The Bieberlicious group read through the comments during their group interview and gave me explanations for their choices regarding what peers noted. For example, when a peer comment was "Deidra seemed embarrassed," Bethany explained that Deidra was "actually getting into it instead of being embarrassed" because Bieber was talking to her, and Tessa added, because Bieber is "like the hottest guy in school" and "so she's supposed to be embarrassed to see him, to be seen with him" (Bieberlicious, interview, May 2010). At this point, I am uncertain as to whether they mean a girl is supposed to be embarrassed to be seen with a handsome, popular guy, or whether the girl in the commercial was embarrassed because she was seen with Bieber before he had sprayed himself with the Bieberlicious cologne. Either way, this group used peer comments as a prompt to explain the meaning they had hoped to convey in their commercial. Although I failed to ask at the time, I think a good follow-up question at this point in the interview might have been, "What could you have done with your commercial to help your viewers

better understand the plot or your message?" Another comment on a focus group sheet for the Bieberlicious projects was that a student's written feedback included, "not heard of it before." To this, group members considered what the student meant, whether they were referring to the "Summer Nights" song or the product:

Bethany: I don't get that one [comment].
Deidra: Because we haven't even, because it's not supposed to be something that you have heard of.
Kenzie: Maybe they were talking about *Grease* or something?
Researcher: Like they haven't heard the song yet?
Kenzie: Yeah, because I've never seen *Grease*.
Amy: You've never seen *Grease*?
Kenzie: No.
Amy: I have it.
Deidra: That's what I got out of it.
Tessa: We're not supposed to be doing something that's already been on the shelves.
Amy: And like there's -
Tessa: We're supposed to be doing something that's different.
(Bieberlicious, interview, May 2010)

A follow-up interview question at this point might have led this group into thinking about revising their projects, but I did not ask this. It seems to me, though, that this group seriously considered and tried to make sense of each comment, and it is when we are able to name a thing, that we can go forward with understanding it, and in the case of this activity, to move forward with possible revision of the commercials. This group's discussions of each comment, then, led them to question and think critically themselves to draw out the meanings of the comment. While every student did not tell me they considered peer comments and feedback when revising their commercials, it seems to me that comments from peers pushed students to revise their commercials.

Revise when given examples of professional and student-made commercials and print ads.

In the final commercial projects, I noted several instances of intertextuality where students brought into their commercials words, music, and action from other commercials they viewed either in class or outside of class. Whitney shared the video *Logorama* at the beginning of one day of the production workshop, and suggested students consider a logo for their product. Other than that suggestion and comments during whole class discussion, Whitney did not directly instruct students to include specific text or action in their commercials. The majority of the commercials Whitney shared with her class were shown during the first week of the unit, while the last three weeks were mostly given to workshop time for their final group projects. In addition to viewing commercials in the classroom, students also wrote entries in their journals and participated in classroom discussions of favorite and not-so-favorite commercials. Slogans and commercial jingles popped up often, including the story at the beginning of this chapter of the day the counselor visited the class and handed out the Taco Bell pencils because the seventh graders were "Thinking outside the bun" by receiving good grades.

Students made many references to advertisements during small group discussions. When the birth control patch group said they needed a Band-aid to represent the patch, a student began singing the jingle, "I am stuck on Band-aid brand 'cause Band-aid's stuck on me!" Walking outside before class one day, someone noticed students were wearing shorts, and a student began singing, "Who wears short shorts? We wear short shorts!" which is the jingle for Nair hair removal cream. Samples of other slogans repeated during class: "Did I do that?" (a pothole talking in a tire commercial; also a phrase repeated years ago by the genius/geek, Steve Urkel, in the television sitcom, *Family Matters* which aired from 1989-1998 and by Curly, one of the Three Stooges, in a short

film in 1934); and "You wouldn't hit a guy with glasses, would you?" (Scott and Michael discussing their commercial's fight scene between a geek and a bully; this phrase was used a number of places including a Bugs Bunny cartoon and by the Joker in a Batman movie). A product making an appearance in the ScarAway commercial was Abreva, a cold sore treatment cream, in the scar-removal animation. Well-known personalities made appearances as well. Justin Bieber was a favorite singer and subject of discussion, and also a topic with which to tease: "His name's Beaver?" The 15-year-old Canadian singer released his first single, "One Time" during the summer before the study, and a second popular song, "Baby" in January 2010 before this unit began in March. As a result, Justin Bieber appeared in several of the student-made commercials and print ads. Other celebrities included President Bill Clinton; Harry Potter (a book character); Vince McMahon (wrestler); Nadya Suleman (a/k/a Octomom, single mother of octuplets); Ronald McDonald (spokesperson for McDonald's Restaurant, said when someone mentioned a student's first name was "Ronald"); and Slim Shady a/k/a Eminem (rapper/singer).

Throughout the unit, as students viewed or read examples of commercials and advertisements, they made connections. Words in conversations and the images and text of the advertisements connected with words and images stored in their "linguistic-experiential reservoir" (Rosenblatt, 1994). This reservoir holds, along with many other pieces of information, the repeated slogans, commercials, images, cartoons, television shows, and other media which students have encountered in their cultural lives. John-Steiner (1997), studying the thinking processes of creative people, found that "in the course of sustained activities writers draw upon previously hidden inner resources" (p.

137). John-Steiner observed that writers started using new techniques and that facts and ideas "stored in 'the notebooks of the mind' are introduced through the interplay of the growing work and the writer's ability to identify new themes" (p. 137). In the present case, the sustained activity of workshop time used by students to compose their final projects, plus the activation of this linguistic-experiential reservoir, may have led students to access memories and ideas stored in their minds' notebooks, and thus the quick association of commercial slogans and jingles throughout the unit.



commercial projects. Whitney showed her students parod

Figure 16 Two of several logo parodies shown to students as examples to define parody. The FedUp and Oops images from fictionteez.com and underconsideration.com
Oops for UPS), a parody of Nike Air shoes, and a

clip containing three student-created parodies of the

Head-On commercial. The student products in the

Head-On commercial parody included Gangsta-On,

Preppy-On, and Imo-On (this video no longer

available on YouTube). On the internet the Head-

On commercial has become a meme and is often

parodied. A "meme" is a unit of cultural information, such as a cultural practice or idea,

that is transmitted verbally or by repeated action from one mind to another

(<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/meme>). Three groups of Whitney's students continued this Head-On parody trend with Arg-Off, Scar-Away, and Pretty-On (which originally had been Ugly-Off). The Adrenolaid and Arg-Off commercials were also influenced by a commercial created by Whitney's previous students in which a fight scene was altered when their product was ingested. That commercial also included a fight scene and was filmed outside. Both Adrenolaid and Arg-Off featured products that changed mood and character upon ingestion.

In the final group interview Scott shared advice on how to switch up the unit for the next year's seventh graders. He suggested having students begin earlier in the unit making their commercials so they would have time to complete them. He also mentioned that while next year's seventh graders were working on their commercials they needed to see some TV commercials in between "because they can see some ideas as they're progressing their ideas ... and they could also have more time to focus on theirs" (Adrenolaid, interview, May 2010).

Revise when handed the camera to film their own work.

Students filmed their own commercials. Either someone from the group filmed, or the group asked someone outside their group to film. Because students had control of the digital video camera, they were able to review their film takes immediately to determine what acts needed to be re-filmed. Viewing themselves on the digital video recording camera led students to revise commercial scripts and the movements within the script. During the interview of the Bieberlicious group, I asked Amy about her experience while filming their commercial in the hallway of the school:

Researcher: I thought that was really done well, how you followed [the actors] in and then made sure you saw all the different faces.

Amy: Also that it takes it, once you've video-taped it first, you have to watch it to see what other stuff you can do to fix your movie and everything. Like one time I did a close-up of the Bieberlicious [actor playing Bieber] and the Butler [actor playing Bieber's friend] and that got too close, and Bethany mentioned it, that I got too close and everything, and that I should back up. And so that made it a little better.

(final group interview, Bieberlicious, May 2010)

Because the group was able to immediately review the scene take, they were able to revise their positions, speak louder, add more animation, or whatever else they felt could better send their message to their viewers. Too, the teacher, by putting the camera in the hands of students sent the message that she had confidence they could use the equipment and high expectations that they knew what would be needed to complete the task. After immersing students in numerous examples and providing the time to talk, play-act, write, and research, Whitney had reason to believe her students could complete the task of creating three advertisements, at least one of those being a filmed commercial.

What I have outlined in this section of Chapter 4 are findings I believe were influenced by Whitney's instructional practices. The constructivist, student-centered learning environment she established in her classroom, not just during this unit, but throughout the entire school year, allowed her students the freedom to be in control of their learning. But until now, I have only discussed student responses to instructional practices. What, then, of student responses to the advertising media itself? I report on those findings in the following section.

How Do Young adults Respond to Advertising Media?

While analyzing journal writings and listening to recordings of class discussions, I noted that the young adults in this study connect emotionally and personally to the commercials, as well as connect the commercials to other texts. They also repeated the commercials' slogans, jingles and narratives; noticed inconsistencies in the advertisements, and contradicted themselves when discussing advertisements. Only a few seventh graders noted the effect of advertisements on their purchasing decisions. Also, the students evaluated parts of the advertisements, but rarely an advertisement as a whole. They did, however, seem to realize the purpose of advertisements is to persuade, and they imitated the persuasive techniques found in commercials and print ads in their final media production projects. I discuss these findings with examples in the sections which follow.

Young adults make connections to advertisements.

In this classroom, the young adults made a number of different connections with advertisements. They noted the work of the ads on their emotions and connected other texts to the ads. Becoming aware of connections and emotional response to a commercial is a first step for anyone in distancing themselves from the producer-desired effects of the advertisement.

Students connect emotionally and personally to commercials. While viewing commercials, the seventh graders often responded with emotional word choices, text effects, and emoticons (pictures which symbolize human emotions, e.g., a smiley face). Some word choices indicated a positive reaction, such as "cool," "cute," "funny," "good," "adorable," "hilarious," and "I love that one!" When students did not like the

commercial, they chose descriptive words such as "scary," "creepy," "ugh!", "annoying," "boring," and "weird," and phrases such as "that was pointless," "EWWWWW that's SO disgusting!", and "makes me mad." Some students used different text effects when using texting language, i.e., WTH, 2 for to, OMG, LOL; using all capital letters, BLAH BLAH BLAH, HATE, REALLY, AWESOME, TERRIBLE; and using punctuation marks including several exclamation points at one time. One student drew a mean face emoticon to express her anger at an anti-smoking commercial where the carpet installer, surveying his finished job, notices a bump in the carpet. Thinking he had dropped his package of cigarettes under the carpet, he stomps on the bump which turns out to be the lost hamster of the owner's child, a realization the viewer makes as a red stain spreads on the tan carpet.

Iris listed an emotion that surprised me: guilt, especially when watching the humane society / animal abuse commercials which show injured and diseased animals, mostly dogs. The commercial uses a slow-motion camera speed and melancholy music to appeal to the viewer's emotions and desire to help alleviate the animals' suffering by donating money. I expected to read "sadness" in relation to this commercial, but not guilt. Desirae, though, brings her background knowledge as a reader of media to bear on her response to this commercial, and instead of the guilt Iris wrote about, Desirae's writing displays a touch of anger: "The commercials that really piss me off are the adopt an orphan or the animal shelters! They ask you for money, but you really only get to give the animals or kids like 20% of what you paid for (Desirae, journal entry, March 30, 2010).

Both Iris and Desirae shared their journal writings about the animal shelter ad in whole class discussion. During the discussion another student added that the animal shelters were "spending so much on ads that they're not doing" what they say they will do. Deidra made a sad face during the discussion, which their teacher, Whitney, picked up on with, "Why do people cry about animals?" A student said, "Like they show them such in pain so if you look at their faces ..." Some students were emotionally responding to the portrayed pain of the animals, except for possibly Desirae who had a different idea. This discussion occurred before an upcoming election where a "puppy mill cruelty prevention act" was on the ballot. Television and radio ads were airing regularly, for and against the puppy mill issue. Whitney, wondered whether Desirae's idea may have come from a jaded outlook of people or associations who advertise for donations, being in an area where every day on her drive to school, she sees a panhandler on the highway asking for money. By having students record their initial response to commercials, Whitney is helping students to take a step toward distancing themselves from the emotional pull of some commercials. It is Whitney's hope that putting emotions to the side for the moment will allow students to look with more objectivity at the purpose of the advertisement.

Emotions are a place to begin critical analysis, but they are only that - a beginning. It is important to note our emotional response, to get it "out in the open," but the work of analysis continues beyond this initial response (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994; Fox, 2000). To note that something "is funny" or is "disgusting" is a judgment, and judgments stop our thinking and close our mind (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990). Closed minds lead to having a two-valued orientation, believing there are only two choices in matters, that something is either good or it is bad, something is right or it is wrong; there are no in-

between. A two-valued orientation "diminishes our ability to evaluate the world accurately (p. 140). In order to model critical analysis of commercials, teachers need to move past the expressive, simple reader response of noting feelings and move students into critique (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994; Fox, 2000; Soter, et al., 2010).

Two students wrote in their journals about how a commercial "makes me want to dance." Hearing food commercials on a car or school bus radio makes one girl hungry and then irritated because she "can't go and eat because I'm somewhere where I can't." Several students wrote about how commercials encroach on their lives. When advertisements interrupt viewing habits, one boy noted that "commercials take time away from the show," and one girl noted irritation when "watching a show with subtitles [on YouTube] you can't read what's being said" because the pop-up ads cover the subtitles. Another girl noted her interactions with commercials where she talked to the characters, "...You're just like get that out of my face! ... then you will be sittin' down on the couch and you see those eyecare ones w/ the astigmatism and you sit there mocking them, 'Well, it means you can't see as sharply as you could.'"

Students connect commercials to other texts. In addition to the connecting emotions and personal experiences with commercials, the young adults in this study also made connections to other texts. An important and effective type of analysis, connecting means "linking observations, ideas, and concepts from commercials to other things, such as regular programs, different texts (e.g., novels, articles), abstract values, and even students' own lives (Fox, 2000, p. 65). Throughout full class discussions during the unit, numerous associations were triggered, with students linking a commercial with another

commercial, with a celebrity, with a movie, and/or with a television show. A few of these connections were written.

In journal writing about a Huggies commercial, one girl wrote, “it reminds me of a guy named Bill on a commercial” because the main character grinned constantly throughout the commercial. I think she probably meant it reminded her of “Bob,” the ever-grinning character of natural supplements for men (I think this mainly because Jonah and others chuckled at the mention of “Bill”). Like Bill/Bob, the diapered baby in the Huggies commercial smiles incessantly, no matter what happens to him: getting fired, dropping his box of belongings, watching his car get towed, losing his house keys down a crack. Cheyenne, although not in reference to a commercial, wrote of naming her pet calf M&M, after Auntie Em in *The Wizard of Oz*, not the candy-covered chocolate product. Connections during discussions happened quickly as students exclaimed, “I love that one! It’s like ____ (fill in the blank)” and when one slogan or jingle is shared, a similar one is added to the conversation. A one-minute exchange on the first day of the unit had students talking about advertisements for Hotwire, Priceline, and Cymbalta, and a “rock-paper-scissors” beer commercial, all of these commercials not having been shown by Whitney, but remembered by the students from their home television watching. Making connections with a text helps the reader/viewer begin to create meaning from the text (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994). However, connections are also a way advertisers know their product will stay in a viewer’s mind longer. Young adults making connections may also be repeating bits of the commercials leading to another finding I noticed in the data.

Young adults react to commercials by repeating slogans, jingles, and narratives.

Throughout the unit, the students repeated commercial slogans and jingles. At times it seemed this repetition was involuntary. As mentioned previously, “short shorts,” Ronald McDonald and Band-aid slogans and jingles popped out of student mouths. Advertisers want their commercials repeated, or replayed, by viewers. We humans find comfort in the familiar, and repetition means more familiarity and therefore more comfort consumers find with a brand (Rank, 1976). Fox (2000) calls this type of response to advertisements "replay behaviors." Replay behaviors include "any type of actions initiated by kids that repeat or reconstruct a commercial -- or parts of a commercial" and serve as prompts to "evoke all or parts of the original ad's message" (p. 91). According to Fox, there are three types of replay behaviors: verbal, where language is used; physical, where imitations of actions or scenes are used; and mental, where thinking and dreams contain commercial features. I found examples of each of these replays in students' responses.

In journal writings and class discussions, repetitions from commercials occurred in the form of slogans, songs, and scripts. Cheyenne wrote three different acting roles in a conversation from a Direct TV commercial, “It’s going to be another thrilling night of TV.' 'Oh yeah! Watch this:' 'You guys comfortable?' 'Absolutely.” The same student shared that the “sniff, sniff, Hooray” (detergent commercial) was a favorite commercial of hers, demonstrating the sniffing action as well. Writing about their favorite commercials, several students wrote and shared by singing the commercial jingles from Hotwire.com ("Hotwire dot com") and FreeCreditReport.com ("F-r-e-e that spells free").

Several students wrote the storylines for commercials, such as “the one where the car hits a pothole [and the pothole says,] ‘did I do that?’” and “the one about Bing and how the vampire wants to suck his girlfriend’s blood.” At least one mental replay was noted when a student shared that she dreamed about McDonalds the night before.

In addition to those verbal and mental replays, at least one student replayed a commercial physically. The physical replay came during whole class discussion when Jonah held his left hand palm up, and with his right hand in a fist, he pounded his palm three times, ending the three-count with a closed fist. This childhood game of rock-paper-scissors was used in the “I threw rock” beer commercial storyline by two men trying to decide who would drink the last beer. In the game, at the three-count, players decide which hand signal they wish to play that round: two fingers extended is “scissors” which is destroyed by a fist “rock” because a rock can bash and break scissors; hand extended flat is “paper” which is destroyed by “scissors” because scissors cut paper; and the fist “rock” which is destroyed by paper because paper covers rock. In the commercial, the winner actually threw a physical rock, thereby knocking unconscious his game partner who had thrown paper, and securing the last beer for his “I threw rock” self. Jonah physically replayed the commercial’s storyline.

As Pavio (1990) found through his research, words elicit other words or images for us, and equally, images can elicit other images or words. Fox noted that “music, words, phrases, and images evoke *other* music, words, phrases, and images - in effect creating a commercial echo chamber” (p. 94). Through the connections and associations these students made, and the repetition of slogans, jingles, and narrative storylines, these students demonstrated one of the main ways advertisers intensify their product through

advertisements: repetition. Often the replay happened without further thought on it. However, even though students replayed commercials, they might later note inconsistencies which made them question the purpose of the advertisements, as I describe in the next section.

Young adults notice inconsistencies in the commercials.

When young adults notice inconsistencies in commercials, they are practicing critical thinking skills. Evidence that students note inconsistencies in commercials comes when they question the commercial or respond with humor or horror. Inconsistencies indicate dissonance, which is a “sense that things just don’t add up, that our understanding is incomplete, that something is incongruous” (Odell, 1999, p. 8). Noticing inconsistency and the juxtaposition of one thing contradicting another is a characteristic of critical thinking, of trying to get things into congruence. When the seventh grade students wrote questions, they were experiencing this dissonance. Questions students wrote in journals included, “What is it for?”, “What’s the point?”, “What in the world does picking your nose have to do with smoking?” (an anti-smoking ad where nose-picking replaced the dirty habit of smoking), and “What does a monk got to do with Pepsi?” We could include with the “question” category the texting lingo of WTH? and WTF? which occurred in a few entries. Also noting that they didn’t understand a commercial, which happened several times (i.e., “I didn’t know what that was about,” “don’t get it”), are evidence of students realizing things just don’t add up for them, a sign they are trying to connect new information with old, prior knowledge. Students used the word “weird” often. When the seventh graders noticed something was weird, they

realized that some things were not going together as those things should, according to their prior experiences and/or per what society tells them.

This clash between something and its context, or incongruity, is also what humor depends on (Moffett, 1976/1983). By the laughter and smiles noted while viewing commercials, it was obvious to this researcher that the students found much humor in many of the commercials. I think that if humor can be considered a noting of dissonance, then, too, should the creepiness of other commercials. One such commercial, this one for Playstation 3, shows a baby doll who cries with a tiny “Mom-ma” one second, then sucks the tear back into its tear duct into eyeballs which reflect a blazing fire, transforming with an evil laugh into the horror character Chucky (when students saw the commercial, a couple of them said "Chucky," a villain who, after being mortally wounded in a police chase, supposedly used a voodoo ritual to transfer his soul into a doll in the *Child's Play* horror film series which ran from 1988 through 2004). The cry-turned-maniacal laugh creates an incongruous picture, as does the wet tear becoming fire. Although one girl said this was “my kind of commercial” and when she got home from school that day, she watched the commercial several more times on YouTube (apparently she is a fan of scary movies), most students wrote it was scary, not cool, and creepy. Additionally, one student noted, “It gave me the chills,” another wrote, “Dude that is freakin’ scary!!!” and another wrote that it would “never play on tv.” I am unsure on which television channel this commercial aired. The Playstation 3 commercial was one that Whitney chose to share with her seventh grade class, many of whom are video game players.

Students noted inconsistencies and, thus, experienced dissonance while viewing commercials. This dissonance is a characteristic of thinking and can be observed in their

questioning, their appreciation of humor, and their noticing of creepiness in commercials. Although students noticed some inconsistencies in the commercials, they did not notice their own contradictions. I noticed contradictions in several students' responses.

Young adults contradict themselves when expressing ideas about commercials and print advertisements.

One of the social characteristics of young adults is that they are "(v)ery idealistic, but often have difficulty bringing reality and idealism together" (CEYA bookmark, The In-Between-Ager, n.d.). Students in the research classroom exhibited this tension between reality and idealism through their writing and their talk. It seemed to me that the students thought they were not supposed to like commercials and advertisements, but actually liked them. Two girls wrote about this in the first entries in their journals. "I hate all billboards," Desirae wrote, and then after a few lines, she concluded that "in Florida they have tons of billboards that flip to a new picture, AWSOME!" Even though ideally she wanted to seem that she hated and was not influenced by advertisements of any sort, in reality, she actually thought the flipping billboards were, well, pretty awesome. Catherine did not separate her conflicting thoughts when she wrote of her hate and favorites back-to-back, "I hate ADs, but my favorite are the Budwiser and Progressive commercials."

Desirae also contradicted her words expressing idealism, with the product she and her group chose to advertise. Her group chose to advertise for a product called "Pretty-On," which they had previously called, "Ugly-Off." The slogan for their infomercial-type commercial was, "Are you ready for the new you?" and featured three average people being transformed into beauties with one application of the cream. It is interesting to

note that while the group advertised an aide to promote beauty, Desirae had some tough words for a commercial that promoted natural beauty of everyone. The Dove "Evolution" commercial begins with a model with her hair straight, no makeup, and dressed in tanktop and jeans. Through time-lapse photography, the model is shown getting her makeup put on, hair dampened, curled, sprayed, and then brushed into waves. A wind machine then makes her long hair fly around her face, and a final photo is taken. But, this photo is not the finished photo for the ad, because the next scene shows a computer manipulating the photo, making the model's neck longer, cheeks thinner, eyes larger and brows higher, until the final billboard shows a person who is strangely different from the original model. The text after the transformation reads, "No wonder our idea of beauty is distorted." During a class discussion one day, Desirae, referencing this and other beauty product commercials, said, "The beauty commercials, they always have on these gorgeous, pretty girls and that just ticks me off. I'm like, why don't you get some ugly girls. I'm not like UGH people, but like nobody's perfect in the world" (class discussion, 3/30). Writing in her journal to the prompt of "choose a commercial and write about it," Desirae chose the Dove Evolution commercial.

DOVE

Uhh IDK WHAT TO CALL IT

I remember how on the dove commercial it went by quickly - all of the steps of her makeover. She went from beautiful to glamorous! It kinda persuaded me to go against all models because some of them aren't naturally beautiful and that's what models are supposed to be! I did judge her I thought no way can she be a model - she's ugly! I knew from the very first step of the makeover she was getting beautiful.

(Desirae, journal entry, April 8, 2010)

Even though Desirae said in class discussion "why don't you get some ugly girls ... nobody's perfect in the world," she contradicted that sentiment in her writing: "I

thought no way can she be a model - she's ugly!" Also, her group advertised a product that will take the uglies off and put the Pretty-On. This seems to be an example of idealism "nobody's perfect" versus reality "only pretty girls can be models." Granted, it could be that Desirae and her group were making fun of the entire beauty commercial scene, but that is not the way it seemed to me. Desirae is a pretty girl, dresses well, wears makeup, seems a bit preppy, is in the gifted education program, dates an older boy, and strives for As and expects she will be awarded them (as her parents also expect, according to her teacher, Whitney). But Desirae is a young adult, in the throes of young adult social development, and is characteristic of young adults who talk the talk, but not always walk the walk (The In-Between-Ager, n.d.).

The students in this case study did not seem aware when they contradicted themselves, and I, like Fox (2000), did not point out the contradictions. In his study, Fox thought the contradictions which his older young adult research subjects made, were obvious to everyone, but tolerated and accepted. This he compares to "George Orwell's 'doublethink' in *1984* [1949], in which *recognizing* incongruities does not clarify thinking" (Fox, 2000, p. 54). While it may not clarify thinking, the noticing of the incongruities is a characteristic of thinking which can be noted (Odell, 1999). So even with the contradictions these young adults made, they were still developing thinking skills, regardless of whether or not they were as of yet able to effectively analyze the effects of commercials. Even without critical analysis of the effects of the whole commercial, students are able to use in their own media production, the techniques advertisers utilize to persuade consumers.

Young adults borrow and imitate techniques used in commercials.

Young adults use their knowledge of persuasive techniques used by commercial creators by incorporating the same techniques in their commercials and print advertisements. Several seventh graders wrote about specific features of the commercials. They noticed the color or lack of color; the music; the dancing; the acting; the tricks (made by diapered babies on roller blades); and the clothes. When a student makes a comment such as “the music sux,” the student is noticing that the whole commercial is built of parts, and that the music part was not to his own liking. Several students wrote about the presentation of ads, including how billboards enlarge or “blow up” a person’s face, how some billboards flip panels to make new pictures, how some commercials are shown repeatedly, and how some commercials have “catchy phrases.”

Noticing the techniques and evaluating them, is one thing. Young adults demonstrate understanding of the techniques when they use the techniques as they produce their own media. The ability to break something down into parts is the beginning of analysis, of thinking deductively. To realize the effect of each part of the message leads to critique. When during class discussion one day (4/1) Whitney shared the downplay techniques from the Hugh Rank schema (Appendix D), several students seemed to connect the downplay techniques to commercials they remember. During this direct instruction, Whitney brought students' attention to medicine commercials which do not specifically name the malady the medicine supposedly cures. Bethany asked, "Is that because they don't know if it [the medicine] will actually work?" Deidra noted commercials which seem to hide a lot of information are those for AT&T telephone plans with the small print and saying "other rates may apply." Jonah noted that some

commercials are "just trying to confuse you," and Tamara noted that Brittany Spears in a Pepsi commercial was "just showing off her body, not the product" as a way to divert your attention from the real purpose of selling Pepsi.

One of the activities Whitney and I shared with the group was the idea that colors have meaning. Groups were given different colored fabrics and were instructed to write down what they thought about when they saw those colors. The influence of this activity was seen in one group's choices in their final projects. The Arg-Off group was very intentional in their choice of colors for the background of their print ad. They used diagonal stripes of red and blue because "red, it's kinda angry feeling, and then blue is more calm" (Arg-Off, interview, May 2010). The color combination represented an angry state before drinking the product and a calmed state after drinking Arg-Off. In one of Arg-Off's planning sessions, the three girls were trying to come up with a slogan. Iris suggested, "Are you mad all the time? That's not okay. Try Arg-Off." Bailee, though, told her a slogan was not a question and so what Iris said would not work. The final slogan was a simple, "Get the Arg (pause) off!" (Arg-Off, work session, April 2010).

A variety of advertising techniques showed up in the students' commercials, whether or not the teacher or students had mentioned them during whole class discussion. The Scar-Away group discussed the use of several techniques during their final interview:

- Jonah: The first time I said, "Scar-away, I hate your product" and the second time I said something like, "Now I hate your commercial and I still hate your product!"
- Cheyenne: Yeah, because usually commercials aren't truthful, so we were trying to be truthful about it.
- Researcher: So his part was being truthful about it?
- Cheyenne: Yeah and that made it kinda more believable.
- Researcher: And then you added the "but wait!"

Cheyenne: Yeah because like I get really excited about those, because like I always want free stuff and everything

Jonah: And I always think sometimes it's good, but other times, it's just like ridiculous because it had nothing to do with your product.

Cheyenne: Yeah, so we made sure we had a knife so we could sell more Scar-Away, thinking they'd be scarred by the knife.

Jonah: And we should have sold them a picture of Justin Bieber because they'd be scarred for life.

Cheyenne: Yeah

Researcher: Say that again?

Jonah: I think it would have been funny if we would have said, "We'll get you, with an order, we'll give you a free picture of Justin Bieber so that you could be scarred on the inside."

Researcher: Scarred on the inside as well, huh?

(Scar-Away, interview, May 2010)

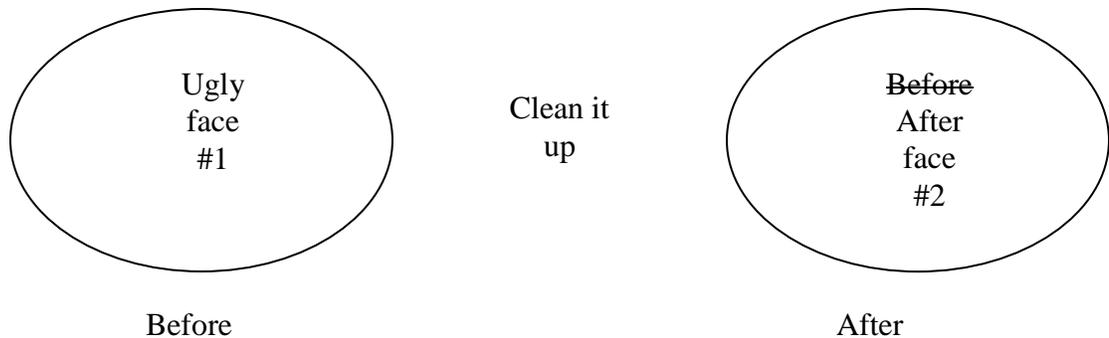
Cheyenne and Jonah utilized several techniques of persuasion in their commercial: the repetition of lines, "I hate your product"; adding a rude, yet true, statement to increase believability "I hate your commercial"; and the urgency in saying "But wait!" offer of the free gift with an order. Although repetition had been discussed during class, the other techniques used by the Scar-Away group were not part of direct instruction during class.

Language is an important piece of most advertisements. Michael, a partner in the Adrenolaid group, realized the need for appropriate language in their commercial so that it would not be censored by parents. One of their classmates commented on the focus group form that they thought it funny that Scott said the word "freakin'" during the commercial. Discussing this in the final group interview, Michael said "freaking" is "just another word for the 'f' word," and he added, "If it was like a real commercial and the parents were watching it, they wouldn't want their kids to watch it, and then there'd be no point of having it on there" (Adrenolaid, interview, May 2010). Michael realized if commercials are censored, there is no point of having the commercial in the first place

because it wouldn't be shown and wouldn't amount to any sales, which is the whole purpose of advertising. By saying this, Michael indicates that he is aware that choosing appropriate language is part of advertising.

The Pretty-On group borrowed the idea of having before and after pictures for all of their advertisements. Their filmed commercial was the infomercial which showed radical changes in three students' appearances before and after application of their Pretty-On product. Another advertisement was actually a secret file that held before and after pictures of celebrities who apparently tried the Pretty-On product. The third advertisement was a computer pop-up ad with flashing marquee lights animation. Desirae drafted a picture of this ad in her journal.

Do you want to be
~~Dirty Face?~~ Bedazzled?
Apply on ~~ugly parts of body~~ unloved body parts.
Warning: may cause serious side affects
such as ugly scarring, fat noses, big lips,
and serious ~~any~~ acne problems



Please call 1-800-PRETTYUP
Are you ready for the new
YOU?

After Whitney led a discussion on the use of language to persuade, the group decided to take a positive approach in their word choice, crossing out "Dirty Face?" and replacing with "Bedazzled" which is a play on another commercial for the Bead-dazzle bead-decorating kit. They also took out the phrase "ugly parts of body" and substituted a less negative phrase, "unloved body parts." This group recognized the need to use "purr" instead of "snarl" words (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990, p. 27-28), where purr words hold a positive connotation to the listener and reader, and where snarl words hold a negative connotation.

Iris was a student who understood and grabbed hold of the parody idea to choose techniques within commercials to exaggerate. She wrote in her journal two parodies, neither of which went with her group's product of Arg-Off. One parody Iris wrote, and totally crossed through on the journal page, was for the product Ugly-Off, using the Head-On commercial meme:

Ugly-Off, apply directly to ~~you-ugly~~ the your face.
Ugly-Off, apply directly to your face.
Ugly-Off, apply directly to your face.
(Iris, journal entry, April 2010)

Ugly-Off was the original product name for the Pretty-On group's project. It is unclear if Iris overheard the Pretty-On group talking about ideas for parodies, or vice versa. Either way, it is interesting to see Iris' change of wording and play with the meme. The second parody in Iris' journal was based on Topsy-Turvy, hanging garden kits to grow tomatoes upside-down, an item advertised much during spring months:

Topsy Turvy
A - "Do you hate doing back breaking work?"
Actor #1 - (overly dramatically breaks back) "Delilah, go get the aspirin!!!"

Announcer: For a ~~limited~~ the price of \$19.99 because we can't round it to twenty, you can get two topsy turvy's for the price of one!!!

Actor #2: Oh my gosh - TWO!!! I barely want one!!!

Announcer: ~~Yes!~~ And now for a limited time get a free taco shell!!! Just pick up the phone and call 1-800-big tomatoes! You're just one call away from giant tomatoes!

Our secret is nuclear waste to make the tomatoes so giant the neighbors will envy you and call you horrible names! So call now!

(Iris, journal entry, April 2010)

Iris gleaned several techniques from the original Topsy Turvy and similar commercials she has seen, including the changing of actors, the emotions ordered by “!!!” and ALL CAPS, as well as the urgency to “call now!” Her group, Arg-Off, did not use any of these techniques in their parody, which they did not finish, but which they planned to be a comparison of the long-term commitment to Anger Management class versus the quick mood-changing drink, Arg-Off. However, Iris did appear as an actor in the ScarAway parody (apply directly to the scar), where Iris walked across the camera view, in front of the main actor who promised a free knife to the first callers who ordered ScarAway, holding a sign, and saying “Call now! Call now!” The parody commercial assignments were a way for students to “talk back” to commercials and exaggerate the production techniques they noted the commercials using. When students can make fun of what is often presented as a serious, take-note type of incident or need by commercial producers, students are well on their way to resisting the inevitable pull of the persuading messages.

Young adults apply what they have learned to a new context.

At the end of the unit, I wondered what skills students gained regarding advertising media. I presented each of five small groups of students with a print ad they had not seen before (see Figure below; also appears in Chapter 3). I asked the groups to

evaluate the ad based on what the class had discussed during the unit. I then posed the question, "If your teacher asks you to give advice to other students about how to read advertisements, what would you tell the students about the things that happen in your mind when you read an ad or watch a commercial?"

When evaluating the ad, students made connections and identified the audience. They also switched between being producers of ads and noting production techniques, and being a consumer and offering advice to other consumers. In addition, a handful of students made critical comments about the purpose of advertising media. Note: All student comments in this section were made during the SunChips interviews conducted in May 2010.

Young adults make connections in a new context. The students made connections between the ad and movies ("It's written in the same kind of writing that they did in *Where the Wild Things Are*," Michael said) and other commercials, e.g., the Skittles commercial where the son is actually a Skittles-bearing tree rooted in the family's backyard, this connection because Scott suggested the SunChips ad would be better if it featured a tree that grew chips. Four of the five groups discussed how the word "compostable" in the ad meant the bag was recyclable, made of natural ingredients, "biodegradable" (Cheyenne) and that it is good for the environment "because it turns it back into the dirt because it says it's made from plants" (Kenzie) and "you're not polluting the air so much" (Michael). Making connections indicates the students are making sense of new information by connecting it to old information and experiences, on the way to transforming and understanding it.

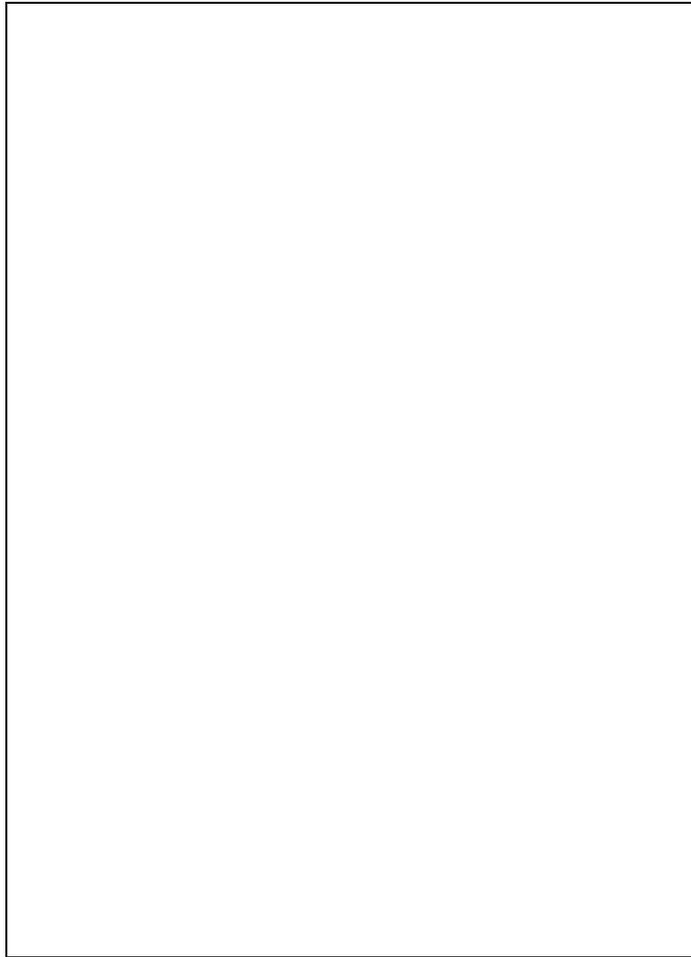


Figure 19. Magazine ad for SunChips used in second group interview of seventh graders. Retrieved from *Vanity Fair*, April 2010. (This ad also appears in Chapter 3 - Methodology)

Young adults identify audience in a new context. Media literacy educators teach that ads are targeted to the values, interests and lifestyles of a particular audience and that identifying this audience helps a reader to consider the appeals used by the creator of the ad (i.e., Considine, et al., 2009). Presented with the SunChips ad, two groups of students identified the audience targeted as being "tree-huggers" and "hippies." The evidence given for naming tree-huggers and hippies as the audience included "somebody who's more earthy, like a hippie -- tree-huggers or hippies" (Cheyenne); and "[the bag is] in the soil so like people like hippies and that type stuff -- they're like 'Save the world!' -- are going to like that [ad]" (Jonah). Following Jonah's comment, Kenzie said the

compostable bag was aimed at "drawing attention to people who probably try to stop littering or try to save the earth."

Young adults switch between being a producer of ads and a consumer. Most likely due to creating their own commercials, these students focused on the production techniques contained in the SunChips ad. They noticed color, font and font size, and the words used. Bethany referenced the focus group activities during the unit, saying, "I think they should have, I think on this for ideas they should have put more than just one because it's just, I personally think it's plain." Students also offered advice to others who view the ad and who might consider buying the product.

All of the groups noted the color used in the ad. The color of an orange bag on a brown soil background had Michael commenting that the orange was used to "grab your attention" like hunter orange, Kara noting that the green around the top of the bag and the orange of the body of the bag were complementary colors like they learned in art class, and Catherine saying, "Seems like they have to use the boring colors and then they put the chip bag in there which is bright."

The font interested Michael who noted it was the same font used in the movie, *Where the Wild Things Are*. Bailee noted the differences in the size of fonts used at the top and bottom of the ad, and Jonah said the size differences made your eyes move around the ad. About language and plotline, Kelsey said, "Commercials need to be funny. If it's funny, people actually remember it."

The group of Catherine, Cheyenne, and Desirae, had much advice for producers and consumers. Their advice is representative of all the groups. I use their own words as I summarize their advice in the table below (the category titles are my words).

Table 10. Advice for potential producers and consumers of advertising media, from Catherine, Cheyenne, and Desirae.

Advice for producers	Advice for consumers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask is it interesting or boring • if it's funny • who they use in it, celebrities or just regular people • don't use too much dull colors • don't use too many words because then you just get bored with it • make sure it makes sense, you don't want it confusing • give enough information that people know what the product is and how it works and stuff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if it's fake or real • pay attention to warnings • make sure you know what they're advertising • is it age appropriate • how long is the toy going to last • batteries or no batteries • warranty • ask "are you really going to use it all the time"

Although much of the students' comments during the SunChips ad interviews focused on literal aspects of advertising media, those parts visible to a viewer, several students dug for deeper understanding, as I note next.

Young adults think critically about the purpose of advertising media. These seventh grade students made several insightful comments about a company's purpose for creating ads which show they are thinking critically about the SunChips ad and advertising media in general. The goal of media literacy education is to not just help students identify production techniques, but to question the purpose of the media itself. The comments the students made when they took a producer stance while viewing this print ad, indicated that the instructional strategy of creating their own advertisements drilled in such elements as color, language, and narrative. However, it is difficult to determine whether their experiences outside of school or in school during this teaching unit contributed to the critical stance students assumed.

Jonah, having made insightful comments throughout the unit, including in the Slinky discussion earlier in this section, continued making critical comments about the

SunChips ad. He said that having a compostable bag appeals to people "because if it's good for the planet, more people might buy, might like their company, and sometimes when people like a company, they'll buy their product." In this comment, he uses the example of the compostable bag in this ad to generalize to other ads noting that if people like a company's position, whether on the environment or other, they will be more likely to purchase that company's product. Moving from the specific example to a generalization, shows higher order thinking. Jonah also said he did not "completely believe" the claim that the bag was totally compostable because there is a thin layer of foil inside the bag, and "How would you turn plants into a foil kind of thing because you can't really turn, like take flour and turn it into metal." Questioning the believability of a claim and seeking more information shows this student is working towards deeper understanding.

In another group, after Scott read the small print on the ad, "All trademarks are owned by Frito-Lay North America © 2010." Tamara asked, "If it's made by FritoLay, why wouldn't they put that in there [on the bag]?" Kelsey replied, "They're not advertising FritoLays. They're advertising SunChips." It seems that here Kelsey realized the corporation's choice of leaving their name, Frito-Lay tiny, in order to focus attention to a single product of theirs, SunChips, not the corporation's name.

After Kelsey's comment above, Scott said, "No one really cares about trademarks," but then he paused and asked "What is a trademark anyway?" His group members decided a trademark was "the company who made it." It seems Scott, having made the generalization of "no one really cares," thought he might need to know what a trademark was in order to be able to make that generalization.

These few students, plus Michael whom I referred to earlier, were the only students who spoke about a corporation's purpose in creating advertisements. In Michael's case, he was discussing Scott's use of the word "freakin'" in the final group interview. Michael said "freaking" is "just another word for the 'f' word," and he added, "If it was like a real commercial and the parents were watching it, they wouldn't want their kids to watch it, and then there'd be no point of having it on there" (Adrenolaid, interview, May 2010). Michael realized if commercials are censored, there is no point of having the commercial in the first place because it wouldn't be shown and wouldn't amount to any sales, which is the whole purpose of advertising. By saying this, Michael indicates that he is aware that choosing appropriate language is part of advertising. In the examples in this section, Jonah realized the reputation of a company as appearing ecologically aware might make people buy their products. When Kelsey noted that even though Frito-Lay owns SunChips, it chose not to advertise that association, it would have been interesting to let her ponder that further, asking why she thought that was, why a corporation would not want its name on a product. Kelsey was beginning to figure out the why and maybe with a little more time and prompting she could have come to some conclusion.

By giving small groups of students an ad they had not seen during the unit and asking them to evaluate it, I was able to see what information they retained from the time they spent with advertising media. They were able to make connections, identify the audience and production techniques, but only a few were able to verbalize a critical understanding of a corporation's purpose and/or complete message sent in advertising.

To sum up this section, young adults respond to advertising media by making emotional and personal connections, connecting the advertising media to another text, repeating slogans, jingles, and narratives, noting inconsistencies and contradicting themselves, and imitating and borrowing techniques for their own ad creations. They were also able to apply information retained to a new context, a new print ad, where they continued to make connections, identified the author, assumed the role of producer and consumer, and several dug for a deeper, critical understanding of author's purpose.

Conclusion

Yesterday was fun. Whenever I see ads anywhere like on the radio or commercials I try to look deeper in what they are trying to say. I think that what we did yesterday helped us a lot. Also we got to see some commercials that were hilarious and we've never seen before. It was a good day and we should have more days like that. (Bethany, student journal, April 2010)

Bethany's journal entry seems to sum up the findings in this chapter. She writes about having a fun and "good day" and indicates she has learned to look deeper into the messages of ads which surround her on the radio, TV, and internet. Because Whitney chose instructional strategies to create the constructivist learning environment, her student, Bethany, is requesting "more days like that." "Fun, relevant, engaging" -- all words to describe the classroom environment Whitney created -- while also learning "to look deeper."

Chapter 5 - Implications and Recommendations

The purpose of this research was to study the experiences of seventh grade students in one unit of study where advertising media is the focus. The following questions guided this study:

How do instructional practices influence young adults' responses to media?

How do young adults respond to advertising media?

The study took place in a seventh grade class in a rural, K-8 school. For four weeks one spring semester, the students and their teacher participated in this study. All students participated in the activities their teacher designed for a propaganda unit using advertising media as text. Conversations were recorded during whole class discussions and small group work sessions, journals were scanned, and fifteen students participated in an interview about their final projects as well as an interview evaluating a print ad not seen before. The primary source of data is from the students' own words, captured in their journals and recordings of in-class and small group conversations as well as the final project group interviews.

This study began by looking at the experiences of young adults in a unit focused on advertising media. As it progressed, I became as interested in the instructional practices employed by their teacher as I was in students' responses to ads. The teacher, Whitney, invited me to observe in her seventh grade classroom while she engaged her students in using commercials and print ads to identify and explain propaganda techniques. I accepted, thinking I would be observing tech-savvy students who knew the ins and outs, tricks and techniques used by creators of ads, and who, therefore, could not

be swayed by the persuasive techniques of advertisers. This was not the case in this study. But why would I assume that today's students would be able to resist the persuasive techniques when teachers since ancient times have needed to teach students to understand and to use persuasive techniques?

By the end of the unit, these young adults were able to identify propaganda and production techniques for the genre of advertisements, which indicated that Whitney succeeded in her objective. For the most part, though, these students were not critical in their reading of advertising texts around them. For teachers who desire to teach critical media literacy, I believe with a little tweaking of the instructional strategies Whitney used, the critical analysis skills may develop as well.

While these young adults did not verbalize their critique of the ads as much as their pleasure with them, nor to the extent I thought they might, their enjoyment of the topic and activities was obvious. By their laughter and engagement, it was easy to see that these students enjoyed watching and talking about the advertising media which they experience outside of school and, to some extent, inside school as well.

Summary of Results

The following assertions with student examples are reported in Chapter 4. In the sections below, I summarize the results of this research related to my guiding questions:

How do instructional practices influence young adults' responses to media?

The design of the learning environment motivated and engaged these students. The classroom environment allowed students to control and manage their creative processes while producing commercials. Whitney immersed students in a genre familiar to them and laughed along with them. She gave them time and the freedom to manage

that time, in a playful, music-rich environment, which engaged these students. During workshop, Whitney made herself available for students and groups to discuss issues of composing and producing their filmed commercials and print ads. Students used this workshop time to write and revise scripts, practice and revise actions, film and re-film scenes. Students also used a movie-making computer application to splice film-takes and add music and text effects to achieve the commercial they envisioned. This recursive process of composition, e.g., moving forward by writing scripts followed by moving backwards to re-read and revise the scripts, occurred with little direct instruction.

Young adults teach each other technical skills. Throughout the production workshop phase of the propaganda unit, I noticed that students taught each other technical skills. In this room, the teacher was not the only expert when it came to computer editing skills. Students taught each other using such strategies as demonstration, collaboration, and coaching. The engaging task of creating ads for their peers, plus the laid-back, somewhat noisy atmosphere of the hands-on, production workshop allowed students to readily share their technical expertise with each other.

Young adults digress while writing about commercials and print ads, but return to initial important points. Digression seems to give students a chance to rest or warm-up to a prompt so that when returning to the original subject, the writer may see it differently. The examples also show evidence that while writing the students are aware of their audience. They address their reader with questions, use a conversational tone, and write about rural topics of interest to their teacher and classmates.

Young adults use talk to explore and clarify meaning as they reflect on others' feedback and response. Talk, whether during whole class or small group work,

was a necessary part of this unit. By conversing with others, students practiced their ideas, borrowed ideas from others, recombined or modified their ideas, and expanded their thinking.

Young adults create and compose through play and song. Play can give students a reprieve from paperwork and can provide necessary brainstorming for composing a script and for creating solutions to problems. Music is also a reprieve from quiet schoolwork in that it stimulates the creative part of the brain. Play and music may also be digressions from work, similar to digression in writing discussed above.

Young adults revise their work without direct instruction. Students revised because they had time to act out their scripts, to research, and to write songs and scripts. None of the groups suggested that the teacher directed them to revise their work. Several said they used the feedback from their peers, inside and outside their groups, to consider what to revise. Others compared their commercials to examples of commercials shown and discussed in class and advertisements they viewed at home to see what changes were necessary to their projects. Students also had control of the digital video camera and were able to review their film takes immediately to determine what acts needed to be re-filmed.

Revise when given time. Students used the production workshop to brainstorm, research, create, compose and revise not only with members of their group, but with members of other groups as well. Groups used the workshop time to write scripts, find actors, make props, review stage directions, and practice the commercials.

Revise when reflecting on peer comments. Students used peer comments from focus group activities to revise or consider revising their final projects. Although they

didn't always appreciate the suggestions, several groups chose to consider peer comments when revising their projects.

Revise when given examples of professional and student-made commercials and print ads. In the final commercial projects, I noted several instances of intertextuality where students brought into their commercials words, music, and action from other commercials. The sustained activity of workshop time used by students to compose their final projects, plus the activation of their linguistic-experiential reservoir (Rosenblatt, 1978), may have led students to access memories and ideas stored in the "notebooks" of their minds (John-Steiner, 1997, p. 137), and thus the quick association of commercial slogans and jingles throughout the unit.

Revise when handed the camera to film their own work. Students filmed their own commercials. Either someone from the group filmed, or the group asked someone outside their group to film. Because students had control of the digital video camera, they were able to review their film takes immediately to determine what acts needed to be re-filmed. Viewing themselves on the digital video recording camera led students to revise commercial scripts and the movements within the script.

How do young adults respond to advertising media?

Young adults make connections to advertisements.

Students connect emotionally and personally to commercials. While viewing commercials, the seventh graders often responded with emotional word choices, text effects, and emoticon images.

Students connect commercials to other texts. In addition to the connecting emotions and personal experiences with commercials, the young adults in this study also

made connections to other texts. Students linked commercials with other commercials, with a celebrity, with a movie, and/or with a television show. Making connections with a text helps the reader/viewer begin to create meaning from the text which is consistent with Rosenblatt's transactional theory and others (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994). However, connections are also a way advertisers know their product will stay in a viewer's mind longer.

Young adults react to commercials by repeating slogans, jingles, and narratives. The young adults in this study repeated commercial slogans, jingles, and narratives. They sang, dreamed, wrote, verbalized, and physically acted out bits and pieces of commercials. Through the connections and associations these students made, and the repetition of slogans, jingles, and narrative storylines, these students demonstrated one of the main ways advertisers intensify their product through advertisements: repetition.

Young adults notice inconsistencies in the commercials. The students in this study noted inconsistencies in commercials when they questioned the commercial or responded with humor or horror.

Young adults contradict themselves when expressing ideas about commercials and print advertisements. Students in the research classroom exhibited this tension between reality and idealism through their writing and their talk. The students thought they were not supposed to like commercials and advertisements, but actually liked them.

Young adults borrow and imitate techniques used in commercials. Young adults use their knowledge of persuasive techniques used by commercial creators by incorporating the same techniques in their commercials and print advertisements.

Young adults apply what they have learned to a new context.

Young adults make connections in a new context. The students made connections between the ad and movies and other commercials.

Young adults identify audience in a new context. Presented with the SunChips ad touting new compostable bags, two groups of students identified the audience targeted as being "tree-huggers" and "hippies" and others who "want to save the earth."

Young adults switch between being a producer of ads and a consumer. Most likely due to creating their own commercials, these students focused on the production techniques contained in the SunChips ad. They noticed color, font and font size, and the words used. Students also offered advice to those who view the ad and consider buying the product.

Critical thinking about the purpose of advertising media. Jonah used an example from the SunChips ad and generalized to another ad, and he also questioned the validity of the ad. These are both indicators of higher order thinking as students work toward deeper understanding.

Pedagogical Implications

In this section I offer suggestions for teachers and teacher educators, both elementary and secondary, to consider using in their classrooms.

For teachers. Which instructional strategies worked and which did not depends on the outcome desired. In the case of the propaganda unit Whitney designed, where her

purpose was to have students identify and explain the production techniques of propaganda text using advertising media as the text, the instructional strategies -- immersion, collaborative groups, writing invitations, workshop routine, confidence-building attitude, scaffolding, creative production of media -- all worked. However, if the purpose was to teach students to critically analyze advertising media, which is a goal of critical media literacy, the instructional strategies, as a whole, did not accomplish the goal. I found this out when I handed students a print ad they had not seen before and they were able to identify techniques of the visual and text elements and offer advice to future ad producers. Upon noticing and naming the production techniques, students did not, without teacher scaffolding, question the ad creator's purpose, the societal values reflected and therefore privileged in the ad, and which persons were left out of the target audience.

For teachers who desire to teach critical media literacy, and for instructors of future teachers, I believe with a little tweaking of the instructional strategies Whitney used, the critical analysis skills may develop as well.

Talk.

1. Let students talk. Talk is the tool needed in classrooms to encourage the development of thinking and language. Talk also encourages the development of language and the soft skills of collaboration, negotiation, and other communication skills. Time to talk is important because "two heads are better than one" when it comes to making sense of conflicting information (Elbow, 1998).

2. Include whole class discussions. The social process of viewing and discussing media in groups allows participants to share and receive feedback about their ideas, allowing them to adjust and refine the ideas as needed and making the participants less prone to manipulation by media creators (Fox, 2000). Whole class discussion helps both students who participate in the discussion and those students like Kenzie, who rarely added to class discussion but who wrote that talking about commercials helped her understand them. Talk is an important educational tool which can help students come to a critical understanding of a text (Barnes, 2008; Pierce & Gilles, 2008; Gilles, 1993).
3. Focus small group conversations using an "oral rubric" (Wilson, 2004). An oral rubric is the explicit stating of talk expectations and use directions and feedback to focus the group's work. Limiting whole class discussions and incorporating more focused small group discussions, would allow students more talking turns and more opportunities to receive the feedback necessary to create meaning. The exploratory talk in small groups helps students, and others, sort through their thoughts, hear how their ideas sound, and arrange information and ideas into different patterns as they work toward accommodating new information (Barnes, 2008; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969).

Writing.

1. Let students write. Writing also helps students reflect on their thinking regarding new information. Students who are hesitant to participate in

whole class and/or small group discussions are able to reflect on their thinking and demonstrate their understanding through writing.

2. Include short writing invitations. Several opportunities to stop and write, or write to a teacher-selected or self-selected prompt, allow reflections and stimulate ideas. Teacher prompts lead to better understanding of texts (Lannin, 2007). The act of keeping pen-to-paper during a routine fluent-writing may allow the mind to digress. This freedom of moving away from a specific prompt gets out the "garbage" and allows the writer to return to the original prompt with new ideas.
3. Consider a longer piece of writing. A longer piece of writing asks students to reflect upon and make explicit what they are learning. One type of longer paper is an analysis and connections paper (Fox, 2001b) which asks for an analysis of a text plus the connection of the text to its place in society and culture, or its context. A longer paper requires students to return to and revise several times as their understanding develops. Students need numerous opportunities to reflect upon and make explicit what they are learning (Cambourne, 1995) and the analysis and connections paper plus the various fluent-writings would give such opportunities.

Create.

1. Set aside large blocks of time for students to play, tinker, discover, and explore. Children develop their imaginations and curiosity leading them to try new ideas and ask lots of questions.

2. Design activities requiring students to create and provide them the materials and equipment to do so. The creation of a text expands knowledge (Scholes, 1985). Students must take an active role in creating texts in order to achieve a deeper understanding of the symbol systems of culture when they actually write, film, edit, revise and produce their own media (Gee, 2003; Hobbs & Jensen, 2009). When people believe they do not possess the expertise or know-how to create media, they are left feeling "powerless about matters of public discourse" (Fox, 2000, p. 165). In the present study, students created advertisements using tools of the advertising industry.
3. Consider students creating a counter-advertisement or documentary. In the present study, by creating advertisements, students were using the tools, or discourse, of the advertising industry, perhaps conforming to the practices of that group (Gee, 2003). The intent of the creative exercise was to practice using the persuasive techniques, but the end result may have been students identifying themselves as advertisers, and therefore, not thinking critically about the advertisers and their commercials. To counter this identification with advertisers and build her students critical thinking skills, change the creative production exercise to one where students create an anti-commercial, similar to public service anti-smoking ads, or a documentary regarding a value represented in a commercial, such as valuing physical health over thinness of models.

Practice.

Provide scaffolds and structures and time to practice using them. In order to master a skill, humans must practice it a great deal (Gee, 2003).

Whitney provided her students with other structures, including the intensify/downplay schema (Rank, 1976) and a set of five questions to ask ads. These scaffolding questions take a critical stance towards "reading" advertisements. Practice using these questions a few more times during the unit may have led these young adults to think critically about media.

For teacher educators. Consider incorporating the above suggestions into methods courses. Put your education students into the shoes of their future students, taking them through a workshop environment and practicing with them the structures of the intensify/-downplay schema and the five questions to ask ads. Ask education students to write the papers, reflect on their experiences, seek media resources to share and ponder. Study talk in classroom conversations by asking education students to record, transcribe, and analyze short conversations between students in their field classrooms. Have your students record the questions their field teacher hosts ask their students, or have them record your questions and reflect on the purpose of the question, perhaps using Johnston's *Choice Words* (2004) as a methods course text.

Further Research

Conversations with veteran teachers about their decision-making processes are a valuable tool for teacher education students. I missed the opportunity to archive my conversations with Whitney when she asked me to stop the recorder. Collecting and combing through this valuable data in future research is a goal I make for myself.

I wonder, also, about the differences between rural and urban students and how these differences might manifest themselves in student responses to advertising media. Are there certain advertisements which draw in rural students, and different ones that draw in urban adolescents? What research tools might be used to study those differences in real-life situations, i.e. without an experiment design?

Further research might also locate and observe the instructional strategies of communication arts teachers in middle and secondary high schools to determine how these strategies differ from Whitney's and her early childhood education training and their effects on student learning. Which strategies for which grades for teaching media? Which skills at what grades? What knowledge at what grades? What instruction in critical media analysis at each grade level effects student consumption?

Although student writing was secured in the data in the form of short journal entries written to teacher prompts and during fluent-writing, further research should make use of student writing samples where students have more time to develop and revise their ideas regarding advertising media. This writing might take the form of an "Analysis and Connections" paper which asks students to analyze the techniques used in a piece of media and connect the media to its historical contexts and media of a similar product or context (Fox, 2001b). This writing may allow for a more complete assessment of the effects of the instructional strategies selected by the teacher on students' critical reading of advertising media texts. And the writing itself would be an important instructional strategy.

Conclusion

Ads are a part of our culture. As teachers, it is our charge to teach students about our culture, including how to interpret advertising media (Postman, 2005). Because students, as well as adults, are surrounded by and immersed in media, they may be unable to notice the effects (McLuhan, 1964/1994; Leverette, 2003). We must teach students how to notice and name persuasive techniques, to label what they see, in order to restructure their understanding of them.

Young adults benefit from the strategies implemented in constructivist, e.g., whole language, learning environments, including time to talk, play, and create. Time is valuable and should not be wasted, but time when students are engaged in talk, whether social or lesson-related, is not wasted time. It is in a social community that students are able to feel comfortable enough to take risks. When they take risks, learning happens. Time to play is also necessary; knowing how to play with ideas, to invent new things, and to create solutions to problems is a skill much needed in today's world. A recent article in *The Huffington Post* suggests that if schools do not give students opportunities to "tinker, discover, and explore," there may not be a successor to the Apple computer entrepreneur, Steve Jobs (Hammond, October 21, 2011, paragraph 2). Play for Jobs was not only part of his childhood, but his adulthood as well. It is sometimes that within play, creative thinking occurs.

The most significant observation I found in this research was that a constructivist, student-centered classroom is valuable for young adults, just as much as it is valuable for younger students. Developing skills in creative and critical thinking, as well as composing, whether in writing or in multi-media, is a process which occurs in a

supportive learning environment, in school or out. Whether accomplished through writing or talking, playing or singing, we compose and revise with forward movement as well as backward movement, restructuring old ideas with new, gleaned from the interaction of the symbols we write on a page with the thoughts we build in our minds, or gleaned from talking with another person or two, using their feedback to remake our own. We have a "felt sense" of what makes an effective piece of writing in a genre we are immersed in, whether that genre is found mostly inside school or outside of school. As teachers we should strive to create a learning environment which provides ample time for learning to occur, along with immersion, high expectations, dedicated work time, peer and teacher support, and necessary equipment. And, then, we teachers need to step aside and let it happen.

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Appendix A - Description of activities in media literacy unit

Why media literacy? Because we want to prepare our students to become informed citizens in our society and to question professional persuaders, we teachers instruct our students in persuasive techniques used in all media, including, for this unit, commercials and print advertisements.

5 basic questions:

1. Who created this message?
2. What techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. What lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented in the message -- including any stereotypes that may be present? Who is not represented?
4. How might different people understand this message differently from me?
5. Why is this message being sent?

Define

Value = belief, a position considered worthwhile or desirable

Lifestyle = a manner of living that reflects a person's values and attitudes

Point of view = attitude, a position from which something is observed or considered

Value = What you believe

Lifestyle = How you live your life because you believe this

Point of view = why you believe what you believe

So, because I value wildlife conservation, I will **feed birds, hunt and preserve wildlife habitats** because I consider animals as being here for our use but we should take care of and use them responsibly.

Important to remember: time, talk, writing, group work

- Time is necessary to work with data, to practice using techniques, to pre-write/commercials.
- Talk is equally important to practice putting our thoughts into words, to listen to others, to co-construct meanings.
- Writing helps us generate ideas, work through ideas, see what we know, learn.
- Group work - when we work together, we get to hear from people with ideas different than our own ... collaborative, enjoyable ... lets us apply our own language to learning, receive feedback as others affirm, challenge our ideas, allows us to adjust, makes us more perceptive and accurate critics ... less prone to manipulation ...

Throughout all of these activities, time, talk and writing were very important pieces to learning.

Other important ideas to remember about media:

- All media are constructed. In the selection process of any communication, some information is included and some excluded, making all communication slanted or biased.

- The final product is a synthesis of text, images, audio, writers, photographers, actors, and directors. What we perceive simultaneously, we need to analyze sequentially.
- Dominant impressions should be related to the whole context.
- Translate indirect messages communicated through images, gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, irony, metaphoric language, etc. Each bit of the communication is meticulously selected and implies something. Seek out that implication.
- Observe. Understand. Judge. In that order.

Rank, Hugh (1982) *The pitch: how to analyze advertising*. Park Forest, IL: Counter-Propaganda Press. See attachment.

To notice and examine creative techniques used by media producers:

First response writing

Advertisers know that when emotions are attached to an object or event, the object or event is remembered for a longer time. This is one reason so many ads and commercials appeal to our emotions. Noticing our emotional response to a commercial is a first step towards critically analyzing commercials' appeals.

Procedure:

1. Select commercials to view.
2. Tell students they will view one commercial at a time, and while they are viewing it, they should write in their journals what they notice, feel, question, and anything they want to remember or think about the commercial. Tell them they may not talk during the commercial and will have one minute of quiet writing after the commercial's end to complete their thoughts.
3. View the first commercial. Wait a minute for quiet writing afterwards. Then open the floor for discussion. Ask students to consider what made them feel a certain emotion, why they think they noticed a certain aspect. Have them give evidence for what they wrote.
4. Continue viewing the commercials, waiting afterwards for quiet writing, and then discussing the students' ideas.

Stop and predict

Stopping a commercial and predicting what will happen next, is a fun activity that helps students develop reading skills not only of understanding author's purpose and plot and character development, but also of learning to question a text, which is an integral part in the critical analysis of it.

Procedure:

1. Choose commercials, noting a crucial place(s) to stop when showing each commercial. A crucial spot may be right before the plot turns, when a character realizes something, and when tempo or mood changes.
2. Show the first commercial, stopping at a pre-determined spot. Have students write their prediction of what will happen next and what product is being advertised.

3. Ask for volunteers to share their prediction, each time asking the students why they made that particular prediction.
4. Continue stop-predict-discuss sequence until commercial ends.
5. Finish by viewing the commercial without stopping and discussing final ideas students have as to why they may have gotten side-tracked on their predictions.

Reruns

Commercials pass very quickly, not allowing much time to mull over the deeper purposes involved. This quick speed allows only initial responses to be noted. In order to analyze a text more thoroughly, we need to slow down and re-view the text, much like in a sports instant replay where announcers discuss and watch a single play several times.

Procedure:

With any of the activities noted here, when a difficult or intriguing segment comes up, take the time to rerun the commercial and allow for discussion of differing ideas.

Intensify - Downplay Techniques

Wanting a simple teaching tool to use in classrooms to teach kids about propaganda, Hugh Rank, original chairman of the NCTE Committee on Public Doublespeak, created the intensify/downplay schema. Rank concerned himself with the most common patterns used to intensify and downplay in communication, persuasion and propaganda. The three most common ways to intensify are easily recognizable: repetition, association, and composition. The most common downplay techniques are more difficult to analyze because, while intensifying puts information overtly to the front, downplaying obscures bits of information through omission, diversion and confusion. Viewers must use extra effort to seek out this hidden information. Rank explains the opposing forces in the Intensify/Downplay Schema:

If one intensifies by repeating things frequently, then one can downplay by omitting them. If one intensifies by association, which brings things together, then one can downplay by diversion, which splits things apart. If one intensifies by composition, which lends order and coherence, then one can downplay by confusion, which creates disorder and incoherence. (Rank in Dieterich, 1976 p. 12)

For a detailed description of intensify/downplay techniques as Hugh Rank defines them, see the attached sheet (arrows) and/or read Rank's chapter "Teaching about Public Persuasion: Rationale and a Schema" in a collection of essays edited by Daniel Dieterich in *Teaching About Doublespeak* (1976) Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Procedure:

1. Explain to students that some ways of intensifying items within a commercial are through repetition, association, and composition. Give various examples including taped commercials and print ads to illustrate the concepts. Explain, too, several ways of

downplay parts within a commercial are through omission, diversion and confusion. Give various examples for these concepts.

2. Ask students to take a print ad and find examples of intensifying and downplaying techniques in the ad. Place ad in middle of a large sheet of paper and have groups of students locate and label intensifying and downplaying techniques in the ad.
3. Conduct a gallery walk. Groups of students travel to each poster, reading and discussing it.
4. Return to original poster and revise poster according to information gleaned from other students' ideas.
5. Whole class share in own words their understanding of each technique.

Meanings of colors

Colors hold meaning and are associated with certain values and lifestyles. Noticing the colors used in an ad can assist in analyzing indirect messages sent by an advertisement.

Suggested meanings of colors*

- Red - color of fire and blood, associated with energy, anger, war, danger, strength, power, passion, desire, love
- Orange - combines energy of red and happiness of yellow, associated with joy, sunshine, the tropics, heat, thirst for action. Gold is included here and means wealth and wisdom.
- Yellow - color of sunshine, associated with joy, happiness, intellect, energy.
- Green - color of nature, symbolizes growth, harmony, freshness, fertility, safety, money. Olive is the traditional color of peace.
- Blue - color of sky and sea, associated with depth, stability, trust, loyalty, wisdom, confidence, faith, truth, heaven, tranquility, softness.
- Purple - combines stability of blue and energy of red, associated with royalty, power, nobility, luxury, ambition, wisdom, dignity, independence, creativity, mystery, magic.
- White - associated with light, goodness, innocence, purity, virginity, perfection, safety, cleanliness.
- Black - associated with power, elegance, formality, death, evil, mystery, fear, strength, authority, grief

*For more information on the meanings of colors and of best colors for specific products, see <http://www.color-wheel-pro.com/color-meaning.html>

Procedure:

1. Collect fabric or construction paper samples of the colors red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, black and white.
2. Explain that color contains a message. Hand groups of students one or more colors and ask them to decide and write down what their color is associated with.
3. Whole class discussion.
4. Next explain that as they have probably learned through art class, there are complementary colors on a color wheel. These colors when combined keep your eyes bouncing back and forth between them, bringing more energy and action to a scheme using them.

5. Have students look at their print ads and note the colors used. Have them decide what indirect message is sent by the use of these colors.
6. Whole class share results.

Foreign Commercials

Because students may be so familiar with their own country's commercials that stop-and-predict activities may not be feasible, use foreign commercials. Without being able to rely on hearing text in their native language, students will need to pay particular attention to facial expressions, nonverbal actions, and understanding of storyline in order to understand the plot and the product being advertised. This close analysis is good practice for recognizing similar techniques in English commercials.

Examining differences in values, lifestyles and points of view:

Binary opposites

In our society there are dominant and subordinate groups and ideas. These groups and ideas are often placed at opposites ends of a continuum. The dominant group is seen as positive and privileged, and the subordinate group is seen as negative and under-privileged. Commercial creators use this either/or thinking in their ads to suggest that using their product makes you better and, more discreetly, that not using this product will make you worse, or keep you as you are which is less than what you could be. In other words, in an ad, there are values, lifestyles and/or points of view that are privileged, that are preferred, and other values, lifestyles and points of view which are to be avoided and which may be omitted from the message.

Procedure:

1. As a class, come up with a list of opposites. Here are a few examples: right/wrong; evil/good; smart/stupid; hot/cold; love/hate; sick/well; win/lose; parent/child; brunette/blond; tall/short.
2. When you have a list of a dozen or so opposites, go back through the list noting which it is best to be, which is the positive idea in the pair. In the above pairs, the following would be positive: right, good, smart, love, well, win; and there may be discussion as to whether hot/cold; parent/child; brunette/blond; and tall/short are more positive, with the most likely conclusion being that it depends on the situation, depends on the context of the situation.
3. Ask students to look at print ads and note the positive value that is shown, as well as the opposite of that value. Ask them to note what value, lifestyle and point of view is represented in this ad and what is omitted from the ad, who is being left out.

Note: Some of our discussion led to opposites of white race/all other races; male/female; rich/poor, all ideas that will lead to great discussion of privilege in our society. Take the time to discuss these important ideas embedded in our culture.

Zeroing in on what's missing

A commercial does not and cannot tell everything due to lack of time. The creator/author must decide what to include and what to exclude from a piece. It is the viewer/reader's

job to make meaning of the piece. Some viewers/readers consider the piece as a whole, when in reality it is merely pieces from many sources, woven together in an intertextual piece. There is always something missing, and it's the viewer/reader's job to recognize and fill in the missing piece.

Procedure:

1. Choose interesting images. Crop the images in order to block out items which might lead to different conclusions. For example, we used Murder Ball photos which show men in wheelchairs playing a highly competitive game of murder ball. We cropped the picture down to show only the face and arms of one player, then larger to include another player, and then to show the wheelchair, followed by the whole picture.
2. Show students the picture most closely cropped. Ask them what is happening in this picture. For each guess, ask for evidence to back up that guess. For example, students looking at the first Murder Ball picture said it was a picture of a track player b/c no one else was in the picture, or basketball b/c of the lines on the court, or roller derby b/c he looked like he was leaning into a turn.
3. Show students the next cropping of the picture and ask them to modify their guesses. Discuss as a class.
4. Continue in this way until the full picture is revealed. Ask them how seeing only part of the picture distorted the meaning they made of the picture and situation. In the Murder Ball pictures, students first saw the determined, strong-muscled athletes and were surprised to find that this idea would usually conflict with their thinking if they had seen the wheelchairs first, wheelchairs often being associated with disabled, or "un-abled" people in our society.

Banned commercials

Showing banned commercials invites much discussion. Ask students to try to identify the values, lifestyles, and points of view represented in the commercial. Ask why they think the commercial was banned: do the values, lifestyles and points of view not match the dominant group? Is the commercial considered politically incorrect? Who is this commercial offensive to?

Changing values

Show how values, lifestyles and points of view have changed over time. What did the 70's commercial for stain-removal say about the duty of the wife? How is it different in the 2000s? Why the change? What's going on in our culture now that contradicts the 70's values?

Focus group

Marketing researchers study us. They target specific audiences, asking questions of likes and dislikes, activities they enjoy doing, interests they have. The market researchers then take this information and tailor their commercial to appeal to the specific target audience's values, attitudes and lifestyles. Watch the PBS / Frontline video "The Merchants of Cool" (February 2001); the beginning segment shows a focus group of teenagers. We first used several brands of cola as a practice for our focus groups. Later in the unit, we used focus groups to critique the students' own commercial creations.

Procedure for product testing:

1. Choose several brands of one product. (cola, chocolate, etc.)
2. Place the products in unmarked wrappers or containers so they cannot be identified. Number each.
3. Have students taste one sample and describe in writing what it tastes, smells, and looks like.
4. Students share with the whole class what they notice about the first sample.
5. Continue tasting and describing the remaining samples.
6. Decide as a group which product is the favorite.

Procedure for commercial feedback:

1. Groups present their commercial or commercial idea to the class.
2. Class members may ask questions regarding the group's presentation.
3. Class members then list the strengths and weaknesses of the commercial or commercial idea as well as suggestions for revision.
4. Groups receive the written feedback from classmates and make revisions as they deem necessary to appeal to the audience of the class.

	Group #1	Group #2	Group #3
Parody			
Print			
Filmed Commercial			
Do you think you'd buy this product if you could?	7-extremely likely 6-pretty likely 5-likely 4-undecided 3-unlikely 2-pretty unlikely 1-extremely unlikely	7-extremely likely 6-pretty likely 5-likely 4-undecided 3-unlikely 2-pretty unlikely 1-extremely unlikely	7-extremely likely 6-pretty likely 5-likely 4-undecided 3-unlikely 2-pretty unlikely 1-extremely unlikely

Production of media / creating commercials

Hands-on creation of commercials will help students understand the techniques of persuasion. Seeing and hearing are passive activities and as such do not always require action on the part of the receiver. Touch, though, is active and requires us to react with material of some sort, to bring meaning from the experience. We learn best when we are active producers instead of passive consumers.

We asked the students to create three advertisements: one needed to be a print ad, a second had to be filmed, and the third was their choice. One of the three advertisements also needed to be a parody. We showed examples of commercial parodies, including a YouTube video of a spoof of Head-On with the new products of Gangsta-On, Preppy-On, and Emo-On. While we also showed other parody examples, this video proved most influential in the products the students created (e.g. Pretty-On, Arg-Off, Scar-Away).

We gave workshop time for students to explore, play and create their advertisements. The workshop began with a mini-lesson such as a demonstration of a technical skill (WindowsMovieMaker, FreePlayMusic.com) or commercials to view and discuss. We found it helpful to continue watching and analyzing commercials while the students were creating their own. After the mini-lesson, students worked on writing such things as storyboards, scripts, song parodies.

Students were given a Flip camera to film their acting. Students would film a clip, review it, discuss any changes necessary to the action, film again, and repeat until they were satisfied with their takes. They then downloaded the videos onto computers, edited the takes, and inserted music.

At the midpoint of the unit, we did a focus group on each advertisement (see above for activity procedure). Using their peers' input from the focus group, the different student groups revised their advertisements.

When the advertisements were completed, we celebrated with a final showing of all print ads and commercials (and food, too). Students also completed evaluations and reflections on the process of creating their advertisements. See attached forms.

Resources:

Color Wheel Pro, <http://www.color-wheel-pro.com/color-meaning.html>

Fox, R.F. (1996, 2000) *Harvesting minds: How tv commercials control kids*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

PBS / Frontline (February 2001) "The Merchants of Cool"
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/view/>

Rank, H. (1976) Teaching about public persuasion: Rationale and a schema. In Daniel Dieterich (Ed.) in *Teaching About Doublespeak*, Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Rank, H. (1982) *The pitch: how to analyze advertising*. Park Forest, IL: Counter-Propaganda Press.

Final Project Reflection

Reflect on the advertisements you and your group created. Answer the following questions:

What did you do best with this project?

If you had more time, what would you change or do differently?

Remember the tricks and techniques of propaganda used in ads (especially the arrow handout in your notebook), including:

Opposites

Intensifying:

- repetition
- association
- composition

Downplaying:

- omission
- diversion
- confusion

How did you use these tricks in your ads? (Note: You may not have used all of the tricks, but each ad used some tricks.)

Evaluation for Propaganda / Media Literacy Unit

List the work you did towards completing your group's advertisements:

Grade you deserve for the advertisement projects: _____

In your opinion, what grade should each member of your group receive, based on the amount of work each member contributed?

Name	Grade	Explanation of grade
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Appendix B - Parent / Guardian Consent Form
UMC Research Project:
Assessing Thinking Processes Involved in Multimedia Composition:
A Case Study of Seventh Grade Students
Campus IRB Project Number 1165137
Spring 2010

Purpose of the Project. The overall purpose of this research is to understand the thinking skills used by seventh grade students during a media literacy unit, especially in multimedia composition.

Nature of Participation. Participation in the project will involve:

- (a) Small group work and individual work during regular class meeting times of the seventh grade communication arts class for approximately four weeks. These sessions will take place during class as a regular class routine.
- (b) Small group work during the planning stages of the project will be taped during class meeting time and as regular class routine.
- (c) Several groups and individuals will be asked to talk about composing processes they used in creating multimedia projects during audio-taped and/or video-taped interviews. The interviews will take place outside of the classroom, but still in the school building, during the normal school day and will last approximately 30 minutes.
- (d) Artifacts such as journal writings, artwork and completed multimedia projects created in class and for meeting class requirements may be collected and analyzed.

Participation is Voluntary. Students' participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Participants may refuse to answer any question(s) and may quit this project at any time. Participants' refusal to participate will involve no penalty of any kind: it will have no influence on grades, teacher evaluations, etc. Permission to conduct this study has been obtained through the University of Missouri.

Confidentiality. Every effort will be made to keep each individual's information and identity confidential. In presentations and publications, Researcher will use pseudonyms and/or assign numbers instead of using names of real people and places. Data will be stored for three (3) years beyond the completion of the study and at that time it will be destroyed

Risks. This project does not involve any risks greater than those encountered in everyday life. Participants will not be purposely deceived, and this project does not pose physical danger. Any remote chances of harm may be social in nature. For example, a student *may* feel that his/her comments are somewhat "wrong" and then he/she later might regret. Because the goal is eventual publication, some students may worry that a reader will be able to figure out who they are. However, every attempt will be made to

keep the participants' identity confidential and to conduct interviews in an environment that is open, trusting and warm.

Benefits. This research may contribute findings to the field of education that assist teachers in working with students and improve the quality of teaching. The study will provide a safe environment in which the participants can talk about how they feel in a media literacy class. Participants may enjoy the opportunity to explore their learning experience in a thoughtful, critical way. They may better understand how they think and how they engage with media. It may also help them to improve cooperative group skills. They will practice several literacy skills, including talking, listening, speaking, writing, and technology, and the projects offer an opportunity for them to include outside-school skills in music, art, and online content creation.

Questions. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may contact me, Juanita Willingham (doctoral student in English Education in Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Department at UMC) at (573) 581-8018 or at juanitawillingham@hotmail.com. The faculty advisor for this study is Dr. Roy F. Fox, Professor, Learning, Teaching and Curriculum, foxr@missouri.edu or (573) 882-6572. For additional information or to ask questions regarding participation in human subject research, please feel free to contact the UMC Campus IRB (Institutional Review Board) Office at (573)882-9585.

AGREE:

*I have read and understand the Parent/Guardian consent form and **agree** to allow my child, _____, to participate.*

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

OR

DO NOT AGREE:

*I have read and understand the Parent/Guardian consent form and **do not agree** to allow my child, _____, to participate.*

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Appendix C - Youth Assent Form
UMC Research Project:
Assessing thinking processes of seventh grade students during a unit on media literacy Campus IRB Project Number 1165137
Spring 2010

You are invited to be in a research study. The study will be done by **M. Juanita Willingham, a student of the University of Missouri-Columbia (UMC), along with her advisor, Dr. Roy F. Fox.**

Purpose of the Project. The purpose of this research is to understand thinking skills used by seventh grade students during a media literacy unit.

Participation. If you agree to join the study, your part will involve:

- (a) Complete classwork during your regular communication arts class. I will look at this work. The study will last during your propaganda unit or about four weeks.
- (b) Participate in small group work during class time which may be video- or audio-taped.
- (c) Agree to be interviewed. Small groups will be interviewed. I may also interview single students. I will ask questions about reading and writing media. The interviews will be video- or audio-taped. The interviews will take place outside of the classroom. Your teacher will not be present in the interviews. The interviews will be done in the school building during the regular school day, and will last about 30 minutes.

Participation is Voluntary. Your involvement in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to answer any question. You may quit this project at any time. Quitting the study will have no influence on grades. UMC gave me permission to do this study.

Confidentiality. I will keep your name private. When I talk or write about the study, I will use fake names. Any papers or tapes used in this study will be destroyed three years after the study is completed.

Risks. There are little or no risks in joining this study. I will not trick you on purpose. There are no wrong answers. Because I will use fake names in writings or talks, no one will be able to figure out who you are. I will do my best to make you feel safe and comfortable during interviews.

Benefits. The study will provide a safe place where you can talk about the class. You may enjoy talking about your learning and your ideas. Information from this research may help teachers teach better.

Questions. If you have any questions about this study, you may contact me, Juanita Willingham (student at UMC) at (573) 581-8018. My advisor is Dr. Roy F. Fox, (573) 882-6572. If you want to ask questions about human subject research, you may call the UMC Campus IRB (Institutional Review Board) Office at (573)882-9585.

I have read and I understand the Youth Assent Form. I agree to take part in this study.

Signature of Youth

Date

Printed Name of Youth

INTENSIFY

INTENSIFY/DOWNPLAY is a pattern useful to analyze communication, persuasion and propaganda. All people *intensify* (commonly by *repetition, association, composition*) and *downplay* (commonly by *omission, diversion, confusion*) as they communicate in words, gestures, numbers, etc. But, "professional persuaders" have more training, technology, money and media access than the average citizen. Individuals can better cope with organized persuasion by recognizing the common ways *how* communication is intensified or downplayed, and by considering *who is saying what to whom, with what intent and what result*.

Repetition

Intensifying by repetition is an easy, simple, and effective way to persuade. People are comfortable with the *known*, the *familiar*. As children, we love to hear the same stories repeated; later, we have "favorite" songs, TV programs, etc. All cultures have chants, prayers, rituals, dances based on repetition. Advertising slogans, brand names, logos, and signs are common. Much education, training, indoctrination is based on repetition to imprint on *memory* of the receiver to identify, recognize, and *respond*.

Association

Intensifying by linking (1) the idea or product with (2) something *already loved / desired by* or *hated / feared by* (3) the intended audience. Thus, need for **audience analysis**: surveys, polls, "market research," "consumer behavior," psychological and sociological studies. Associated by *direct* assertions or *indirect* ways: metaphoric language, allusions, backgrounds, contexts, etc. Terms describing common subject matters used to link: *Flag-Waving, God-on-Our Side, Plain Folks, Band-Wagon, Testimonials, Tribal Pride, Heritage, Progress, etc.*

Composition

Intensifying by pattern and arrangement uses *design, variations in sequence and in proportion* to add to the force of words, images, movements, etc. How we put together, or compose, is important: e.g. in verbal communication the choice of words, their level of abstraction, their patterns within sentences, the strategy of longer messages. Logic, inductive and deductive, puts ideas together systematically. **Non-verbal** compositions involve *visuals* (color, shape, size); *aural* (music); *mathematics* (quantities, relationships) *time* and *space* patterns.

Omission

Downplaying by omission is common since the basic selection / omission process *necessarily omits* more than can be presented. All communication is limited, is edited, is slanted or biased to include and exclude items. But omission can also be used as a *deliberate* way of concealing, hiding. Half-truths, quotes out of context, etc. are very hard to detect or find. Political examples include *cover-ups, censorship, book-burning, managed news, secret police activities*. Receivers, too, can omit: can "filter out" or be closed-minded, prejudiced.

Diversion

Downplaying by distracting focus, diverting attention away from key issues or important things; usually by intensifying the side-issues, the non-related, the trivial. Common variations include: "*hairsplitting, "nit-picking, "attacking a straw man, "red herring"*"; also, those emotional attacks and appeals (*ad hominem, ad populum*), plus things which drain the energy of others: "*busy work, "legal harassment, etc.* Humor and entertainment ("*bread and circuses*") are used as pleasant ways to divert attention from major issues.

Confusion

Downplaying issues by making things so complex, so chaotic, that people "give up," get weary, "overloaded." This is dangerous when people are unable to understand, comprehend, or make reasonable decisions. Chaos can be the accidental result of a disorganized mind, or the deliberate flim-flam of a *con man*, or the political *demagogue* (who then offers a "simple solution" to the confused). Confusion can result from *faulty logic, equivocation, circumlocution, contradictions, multiple diversions, inconsistencies, jargon* or anything which blurs clarity or understanding.

DOWNPLAY

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Appendix E - Media Resources

Including Television Commercials, Public Service Announcements, and Video Parody Examples Selected by the Teacher as Part of the Curriculum Unit

Television Commercials

- Adidas. (2007). Commercial. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Hkd3_K08NM&feature=related
- AGF Insurance. (2007). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGD7J6MP2C8&NR=1>
- Ajinomoto Stadium. (2006?). Commercial (Japan). Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-B52PV876I&feature=related>
- All Bran. (2007). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwX8MzOKOzI>
- All. (1987). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xF-KWN9QhKk>
- American Dairy Association. (2005). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7CHrsrTPSc&feature=related>
- American Isuzu Motors (Amigo). (1998). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5EB5CRCTqQ> Also available at <http://www.tvspots.tv/video/4646/AMERICAN-ISUZU-MOTORS-SLINKY>
- Anga (Scotch Bird's Nest Beverage). (2005) Commercial (Thailand). Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Z33g0zLjY0&NR=1>
- Anheuser-Busch. (2006). Commercial. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlj_UHImba0&feature=related
- Avis. (2006). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcXbURDKYi8&NR=1>
- British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, The (BCSPCA). (2008). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IO9d2PpP7tQ>
- Budweiser. (2006). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsieIGFnbYI>
- Centraal Beheer. (2006?). Commercial (Netherlands). Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNJlvd5jEtY&NR=1>

- Coca-Cola. (2008?). Commercial (Pakistan). Retrieved from
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nz_LTyCvA9A&feature=related
- Dove. (2006). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hibyAJOSW8U>
- DS TV (2007). Commercial (India) Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5HLsvwLPpQ&feature=related>
- EDS (n/k/a HP Enterprise Services). (2005). Commercial. Retrieved from
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_MaJDK3VNE
- Epson. (2007?). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3ijMFdaUA>
- Evian. (2009). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQcVIIWpwGs>
- Folger. (1982). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsieIGFnbYI>
- Folger. (2009). Commercial. Retrieved from
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOQk_pWmisA
- General Motors. (2007). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQKk3PI-DW8>
- Head-On. (2006). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Is3icfcbmbs&feature=related>
- Hillshire Farms. (2007). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QH2BKF8nKVc>
- Huggies. (2008). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCQw89KI7P8>
- Hyundai. (2006). Commercial (Australia). Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2Jfma9F7Mg&NR=1>
- Isuzu. (____). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.tvspots.tv/video/4646/AMERICAN-ISUZU-MOTORS-SLINKY>
- Kooperativa Vienna Insurance Group. (2007). Commercial (Czech). Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQQD9bPrUPU&NR=1>
- Liberty Mutual. (2006). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wMwoexR1evo>

- Lotto. (2007). Commercial (Scandinavia). Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1iDbBEAycs&NR=1>
- McDonalds. (1975). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=en4muUSIRT4>
- McDonalds. (1983). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XVS1sIuCeM>
- McDonalds. (1990). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NP3a6ShtJk4>
- McDonalds. (1993). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v= oACRt-Qp-s>
- Mercedes Benz. (2007). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHX2mvFVQMs&feature=related>
- Orange OBox. (2006). Commercial (Israel). Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2dd_IKZzwc
- Oscar Mayer. (1973). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dFAtcI- 44>
- Oscar Mayer. (1998). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnljqW1Pmk>
- Pepsi. (2006). Commercial (banned in US). Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LvnLOjmF8M>
- Pepsi. (2006). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40DykbPa4Lc>
- Pepsi. (2008?). Commercial (United Kingdom). Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVBSE1VkMK8&feature=related>
- Polisan. (2006). Commercial (Czech). Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6M0c2x9Sso>
- PS3. (2006). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqkNPcUMffU>
- Slinky. (1970?). Commercial. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CM_sMM_tvX8
- Slinky. (1980?). Commercial. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XdjNH34a2l4>

- SmartBeep. (2006?). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iApaITRQ9XU&feature=related>
- State Farm Insurance. (2008). Commercial (China). Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8eguPp3r5U0>
- Stratos. (2005). Commercial (Norway). Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Co5clbSVmIU>
- Tide to Go. (2008). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2cs8gnb42A>
- Tootsie Roll. (1977). Commercial. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qayjR8Qbyfc&NR=1>
- Tootsie Roll. (1984). Commercial. Retrieved from
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jhjb4P_jnKk
- Twin Lotus Black Herbal Toothpaste. (2006?). Commercial (Thailand). Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUz4ZjtIFGg&feature=related>
- Vodaphone. (2005?). Commercial. (India). Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6Cuq-BueEs>
- Wisk. (1970?). Commercial. Retrieved from
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3N_skYSGoY

Public Service Announcements

- Callender, N., Dayot, M., & Yousif, L. (2007) *Discrimination: Life as a teen*. [Video file]. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cu815YGWSWA&NR=1>
- Danish Institute for Human Rights, The. (2007). *Discrimination hurts*. [Video file]. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tm6qRAsCkUk&feature=related>
- Indigo Love of Reading Fund. (2006). *Reading inspires kids*. [Video file]. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HypgcCT1r68&feature=related>
- National Council Against Smoking. (2007). *Smoking kills*. [Video file]. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7uFmqynVSxE&NR=1>
- National Council Against Smoking. (2006). *What's so cool about a filthy habit*. [Video file]. Retrieved from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mz0N-jVrRWU&NR=1>

Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (Producer). (2010). *Embrace life*. [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-8PBx7isoM>

Video Parody Examples

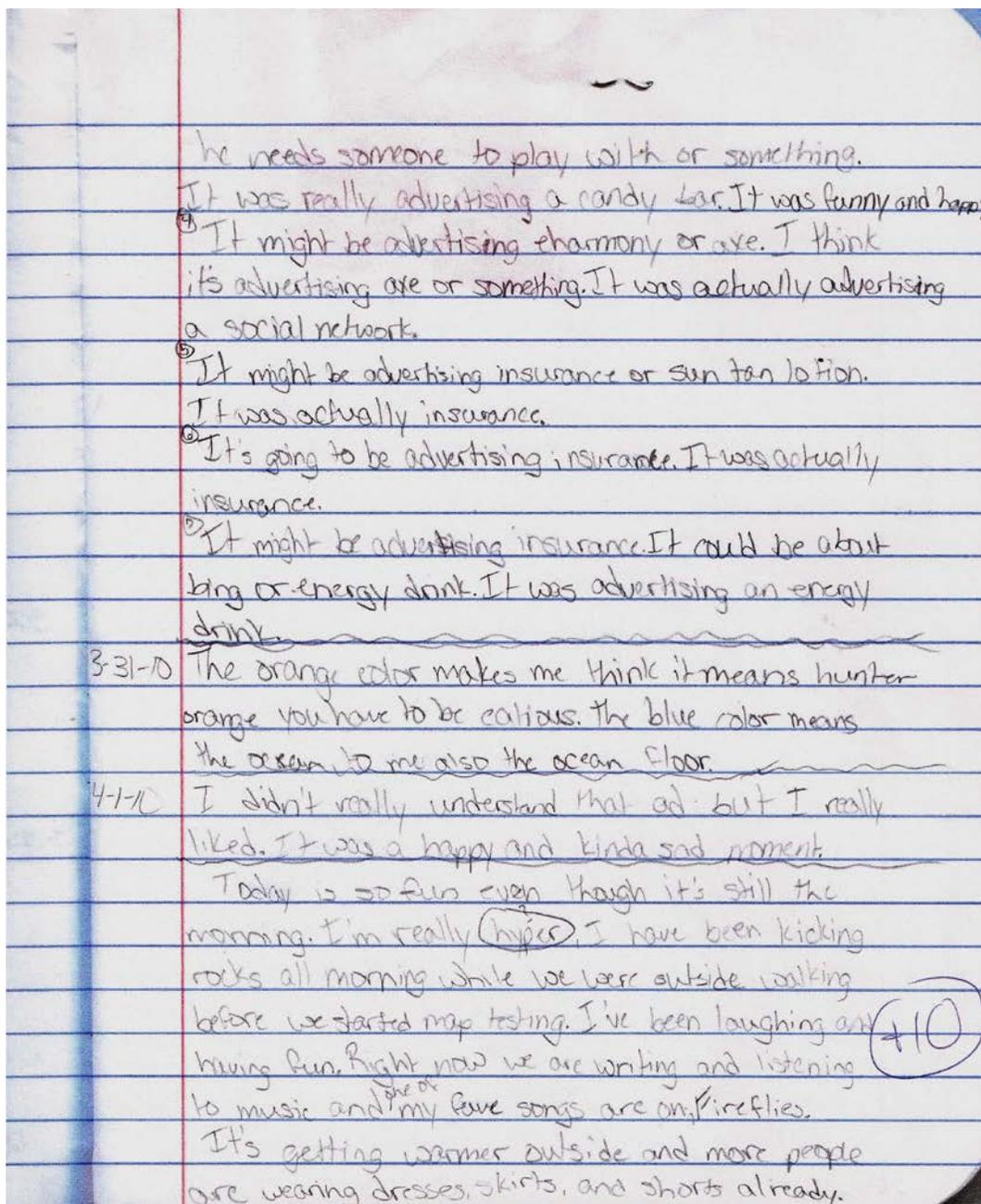
Head-On Parody created by students, featuring Gangsta-On, Emo-On, and Preppy-On, formerly found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQKggBU2nvE> is no longer available at that URL address.

Nike. (2010). The secret behind Nike Air. [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/user/nike?v=QxAz9lKvclc&feature=pyv&ad={creative}&kw={keyword}>

www.mattcrump.com (2009) Twin Draft Guard Parody. [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnlIyvuxR3w>

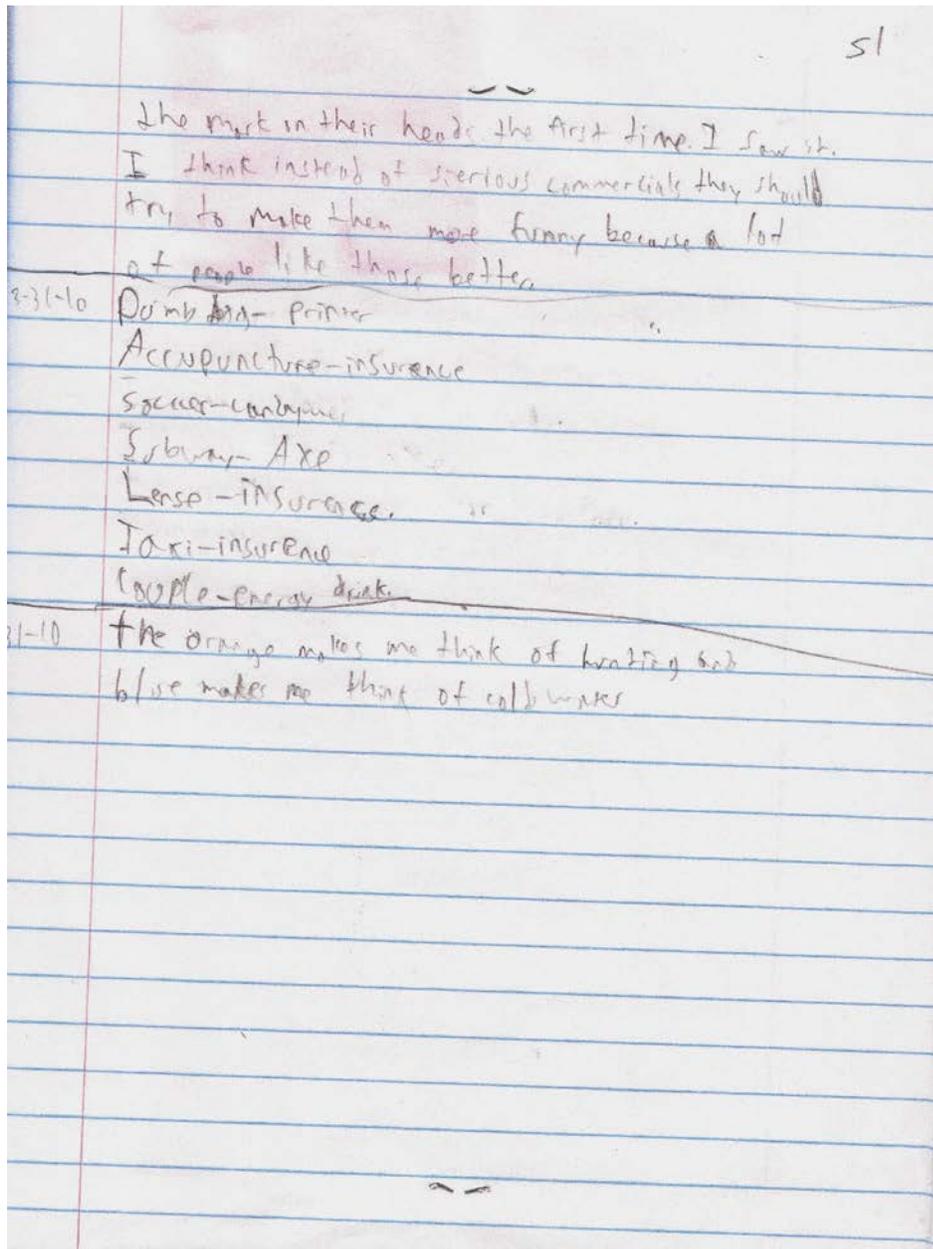
Appendix F - Sample Journal Pages

Bethany



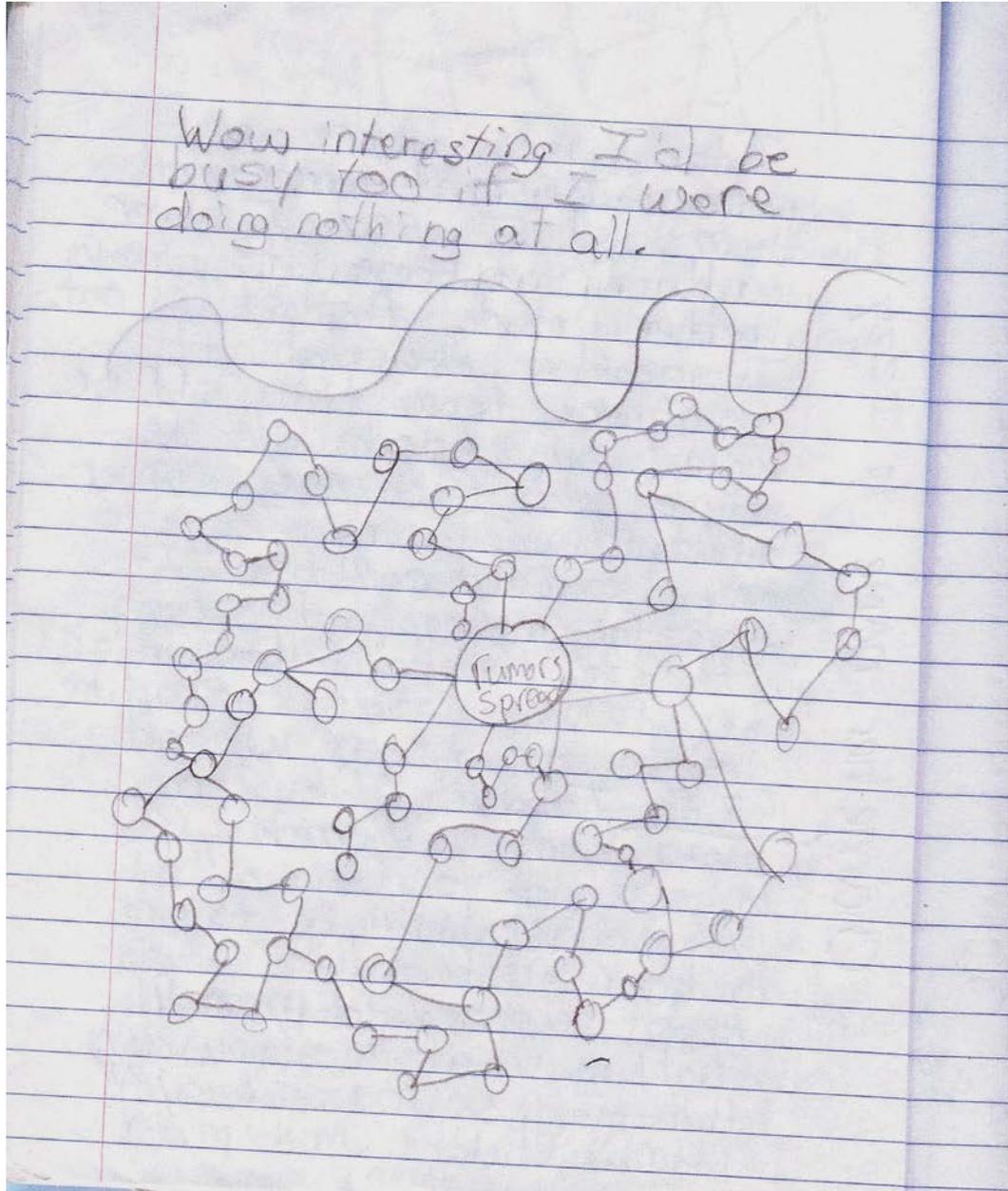
Appendix F - Sample Journal Pages

Jonah



Appendix F - Sample Journal Pages

Iris



Appendix G - Interview questions for final project groups

Referring to the group's projects:

Tell me about this commercial.

Describe the process you went through as you created it.

What did you think about as you were creating your advertisements?

What was easy? What was difficult?

What did you discover as you worked on it?

Hand group members copies of the typed focus group comments from their peers regarding their final projects. Ask:

Are there any comments that you would like to respond to? That you like, that you don't like?

Any comments you don't understand?

Appendix H - Focus Group Comments

Peer comments on advertising projects

Scar Away

parody:

I know exactly what they were talking about

funny, love when Iris came in

fun, fun & funny

Scaraway, funny Headon parody

funny ... maybe someone that had a real scar

funny, like extra knife, liked it how they made users weird

repeating line similar to Head On, knife included, nice

funny made fun of Head On

funny, liked when Iris walked by with sign

funny, parody of head on, annoying

choppy, a little funny, people were interrupted a lot, music = too bad

funny, scar away!

I like it, it's hilarious, I also like how they added and took away some things, especially the way they put it together

funny, parody of head on, need to come in with better timing

annoying, but in a funny way

annoying and not comprehensible

print:

perfect, like it, funny

amazing

funny lol good

more color, more detail

like the randomness, more color, like layout

Harry Potter w/ scar who causes the symptoms, Harry Potter w/out scar

has Harry Potter cool about his scar

love the tube and stick form part, funny

good, wow!, more color

good, don't like that they made fun of JB

funny, liked the JB comment

Its good, I like it, it includes Justin Bieber and Harry Potter, it can also be a parody as well

good, done with editing

It's alright I guess, it's not really really good but its also not very very bad either

It okay and funny

filmed commercial:

I don't know but probably not

lol funny, very interesting
think we're done with editing
I like it, it's kind of funny, some parts could be better
Scar Away, I'd buy it!
good, funny, could have
great, wonderful, colorful
nice, creative but maybe some more color, more creative, a little choppy
why would a child have a knife
information at end
funny, liked idea, liked extra, could have more toys
needs a little more humor
funny, lol, I liked it
liked it
needs a little changed
funny, nicely planned, maybe need to come up with something realistic

Appendix I - Marked Interview

Metaphorical situation audience purpose

agmt

J Yeah because like the funny ones you usually don't really take seriously

C Yeah

J ok

C and people

J It all depends cause like with the Bud commercials they're usually pretty funny but some people take it some people won't buy it because it's like beer, like with beer when you get drunk you do some silly like funny things so like it depends on like if that's going to happen or not, if you're going to be doing retarded things like that

beer again "retarded"

C and scarring is kinda more serious. So I can like help you like you in life like people might like sympathize that you have this huge scar and it might not like get you treated equally

Cont comment: kids on it

J okay. So that was your before and after, your print ad

C yeah

J yeah

J then you had the one with the free knife

C yeah

J and then you had

J that was the parody

C we had our parody and our commercial

J what was the other one?

J uh

C uh there's these two little kids fighting

J and they were fighting over a ball

J okay all right

C and then there's the Head-On commercial

J okay so talk about one of those and how you came up with it

I like why?

stay-telling function "and then" look @ Carol's chapter on functions of talk
continues w/ "and" or is it just a nervous habit or way to establish turn? Total how many ads? Total VS. begins separate turn?
does "and" come after following "yeah"?
agmt?

Appendix K - Transcript of Slinky class discussion

Teacher: So, obviously, I didn't find a slinky ad for the 90s. Why do you think that might be?

Bethany: There were no Slinkys.

Michael: Because Slinkys are out of style.

Ty: Way out of style.

Teacher: One of the sixth graders had a Slinky in the hallway last week.

Tamara: There still are Slinkys.

Cheyenne: Slinkys are awesome!

Bethany: They really were profuse.

Jonah: Not profuse, but they're fun.

Amy: They're very simple.

Teacher: What do you think of the Slinky's ad?

Tessa: I wrote they were "boring and annoying."

Several other students make a number of responses, including "cheesy", "I love it", and "things you've done with it"

Teacher: Yeah, it's things you've done with a slinky.

Michael: Have you seen the Ace Ventura where it went down like 600 steps?

Teacher: Listen to the music of this one. (*replays 1970s commercial*)

Jonah: He actually sings that song.

While listening, several students respond at once including one saying "old music"

Teacher: But it wasn't old in the 70s. But how else can you describe it?

Catherine: Very old microphone

Teacher: So, like low quality?

Several students respond at once, researcher cannot pull out single comments, but teacher singles out responses and responds by repeating with a questioning tone several students' responses "like a lullaby?" and "that's more like a mom singing it?"

Teacher: So, then you guys said it was a mom singing before (in the 1970s commercial)

Tamara: Now it's a girl.

Teacher plays 80s commercial again

Tamara: It's a guy!

Teacher: Does it sound like a lullaby anymore?

Bethany: No, it sounds louder and joyful.

Teacher: And you said the other one was cheesy. Was this one as cheesy as the other?

Jonah: No, they did some cool stuff with this.

Teacher: How does it change between the 70s and 80s?

Jonah: Not cheesy

Several students respond at once

Teacher: Use a word other than cheesy.

Several students respond at once and the teacher pulls out several to repeat.

Teacher: More colors

Jonah: A lot more going down the stairs

Teacher: It just made it more interesting to you

Jonah: A lot more going down stairs

Amy: More movement

Teacher: A lot more movement in the 80s

Ty: Annoying

Teacher: And then for the last one I realize it's not selling a slinky but it was the only thing I could find ...

Michael: I love that one!

Teacher: ... that used the slinky song. Look at the way they made the ad though. (plays 90s commercial, and acknowledges that she heard Jonah's earlier comments by responding) You mentioned the stairs, Jonah. They use the stairs.

Ty: Afro

Tamara: They use Amigo

Teacher: Look at their hair.

Tamara: It's all poofy.

Teacher: Like what? Look how they're dressed.

Bethany: It's like 90s.

Teacher: No, it's not the 90s.

Jonah: Dressed in like the 70s.

Teacher: The 70s

Tamara: They're dressing like hippies.

Teacher: Because when were hippies around?

Jonah: Like the late 60s early 70s.

Teacher: Into the 70s. So even though it's a 1990s something ad, and they're advertising a car, why did they make it 1970s year in clothes?

Jonah: Because they were the kids that like were playing with the Slinkys, so like it's like they were the ones getting Slinkys, so now they're doing the same thing with a car.

Teacher: So if you could afford to buy a Slinky then, and you wanted to buy a Slinky then

Tamara: You can afford to buy

Cheyenne: A car!

Teacher: An Amigo! Because, like Jonah said, it's the same kids that had the Slinkys that are now going to be in the Amigo. And then when you have a Slinky what do you think of being?

Bethany: A kid again

Teacher: A kid again. So with this car, are they targeting people who want an uptight family car?

Tamara: No

Cheyenne: Yeah

Tamara: No, not really

Teacher: They're, you're going to do an uptight family car on the beach doing doughnuts?

Cheyenne: No

Bethany: You should get

Michael: I would

(laughter)

Amy: My dad would

Teacher: But is he uptight? Like does he wear a suit all buttoned up with a tie?

Amy: No

Teacher: Yeah, so they're not doing an uptight family thing. What are they asking adults to do in that Amigo commercial?

Bethany: Go back

Teacher: Go back to your childhood. This car will help connect you back to that childhood.

Michael: Yeah 'cause then you'll be an amigo.

Teacher: And what is an amigo?

Michael: Friend

Teacher: Okay. Let's take a look here ... (*continues to viewing next commercial*)

(3/30/10 class discussion, minute 24:44 through 29:50)

VITA

Juanita Willingham taught for 11 years in grades four, five, and six during which she completed her M.Ed. at the University of Missouri - Columbia. She has been active in professional development for over ten years through her involvement with the Missouri Writing Project. She currently serves as Associate Director for the Missouri Writing Project at the University of Missouri - Columbia. While at MU, Juanita has taught courses for preservice elementary, middle, and secondary teachers on the teaching of reading, writing, and media literacy. She has also taught online courses on writing and on teaching informational texts in the elementary school. Her research interests include writing, media education, digital literacies, and teacher education. Juanita's husband is an outside plant manager at a rural telephone company. They have two daughters, a son-in-law, and a grandson.