

Project: Investigate Advertising Slogans

Objective

Explore logical reasoning as it applies to advertising slogans.

Materials

newspapers, magazines, radio, or television

Investigation

In this project, you will investigate the logic behind advertising slogans. For example, what does the slogan, “Use Mr. Smiley toothpaste for healthy gums and white teeth.” mean? Does it mean that if you do not use Mr. Smiley toothpaste, you will not have healthy gums and white teeth? Is that what the advertisers would like you to think?

To analyze the logic of the slogan, first write the slogan in if-then form. Also examine the inverse, converse, and contrapositive forms to help you reach conclusions about the product slogan.

Conditional: If you use Mr. Smiley toothpaste, then you will have healthy gums and white teeth.

Inverse: If you do not use Mr. Smiley toothpaste, then you will not have healthy gums and white teeth.

Converse: If you have healthy gums and white teeth, then you use Mr. Smiley toothpaste.

Contrapositive: If you do not have healthy gums and white teeth, then you do not use Mr. Smiley toothpaste.

The advertiser is hoping that you will accept the truth of their slogan and all of the conditionals associated with it.

Use a variety of media sources to investigate the advertising slogans for three different products. Analyze the logic of each slogan and identify the impact the slogan has on you or your family members.

1. Write each slogan in its original form. Identify the source it came from.
2. Write each slogan as a conditional statement in if-then form.
3. Write the inverse, converse, and contrapositive of each statement.
4. What do you think about each slogan after examining all of its forms? Is it a realistic slogan? Can you suggest a way to improve the slogan to make it more appealing or more realistic?
5. Tell how you or someone in your family is affected by the slogan. Does it catch your interest? Would you buy the product based only on the slogan? *Explain.*

Present Your Results

Write a report containing the information outlined above for each slogan. Include a cut-out, copy, or your own drawing of each advertisement. Describe what you learned about the use of logic in the advertising slogans you selected.

Notes for the Teacher

Project Goals

- Write slogans as conditional statements in if-then form.
- Write and interpret the inverse, converse, and contrapositive of a conditional statement.

Managing the Project

It is important to have a wide variety of product slogans identified. You may want to identify some product categories, such as car dealerships, beverages, or clothing, and list them on the board. Students may need help in rewriting a slogan as a conditional statement. Allow some class time for this activity, even though some work is being done outside of class. You might have students verify with you that conditional statements are written properly before they continue. Remind students that media sources for slogans should be identified as completely as possible, including names and dates of magazine sources and call letters of radio or television sources. Encourage students to discuss their slogans and ideas at home with other family members.

Discuss reasons for variations, if any. Have a class discussion at the completion of the project.

Rubric for Project

The following rubric can be used to assess student work.

4. The student selects and writes three advertising slogans as conditional statements. The inverses, converses, and contrapositives are written correctly. Media sources are sufficiently identified. The student thoroughly analyzes the logic, makes insightful suggestions for improvement, and describes the impact on the student or the student's family. The student writes an excellent general summary about the use of logic in advertising.
3. The student selects and writes three advertising slogans as conditional statements. Most of the inverses, converses, and contrapositives are written correctly. Media sources are identified. For each slogan, the student may have done some part incorrectly, such as analyzing the logic, making suggestions for improvement, or describing the impact on the student or the student's family. The general summary about the use of logic in advertising may not be as clear and thorough as possible.
2. The student selects and writes at least two advertising slogans as conditional statements. The student writes the inverses, converses, and contrapositives of each conditional statement, but there are some errors. The media source of each slogan might not be identified. For each slogan, the student has done some part incorrectly. The general summary about the use of logic in advertising is poorly written.
1. The student selects and writes one or two advertising slogans as conditional statements. The student attempts to write the inverse, converse, and contrapositive of each conditional statement. The media source of each slogan is not identified correctly or may be missing.

Answer Key

1. Check that the student includes a source with the slogan. *Sample answer:* Pup's Choice dog food will give your dog a healthy and happy life.
2. *Sample answer:* If your dog eats Pup's Choice dog food, he will have a healthy and happy life.
3. *Sample answer:* Inverse: If your dog does not eat Pup's Choice dog food, then he will not have a healthy and happy life. Converse: If your dog has a healthy and happy life, then he eats Pup's Choice dog food. Contrapositive: If your dog does not have a healthy and happy life, then he does not eat Pup's Choice dog food.
4. Check the student's answers. Look for analysis of the relationship between the different conditional statements. The contrapositive is logically equivalent to the original condition but no statement is true just because it can be written as a conditional statement.
5. Check the student's answers