

2.3 Persuasion by playfulness

2.3.1 Using wit and whimsy

Texts: *Watch out* series of posters

Sometimes composers, especially advertisers, come up with ideas to sell a message that will amuse and entertain. This can be especially effective when it conveys a serious message.

Eyes advertisement

1. What is your initial reaction to this advertisement? (one sentence)
2. What is the purpose of the eyeballs? Look closely at their focus and make a list of the potential dangers/obstacles the eyes have spotted.
3. What is amusing about it?
4. How are drivers supposed to change their driving behaviour after seeing this image?

Drinking and riding don't mix

1. Who is the targeted audience and what is the message?
2. What makes this graphic striking? Use the framework *Analysing visual texts* to examine it closely.
3. What elements create wit or amusement? Consider such elements as incongruity and verbal puns.
4. Why do you think the person in the helmet is not a girl?

Can you think of a television advertisement that is witty? Do a paired interview where you explain the advertisement and then get your partner to tell you what they understand by your interpretation of wit in advertising. Then swap roles for the other person to tell about a witty ad which they remember. Can you both name the 'product' the advertisements are supposed to sell?

Bullfight poster

This poster uses a visual metaphor. Metaphor compares two unlike objects by linking them through at least one feature they have in common. This helps us see both objects in new, interesting and sometimes shocking ways.



Complete the paragraphs below to explain the metaphor in the poster and its effect on the reader

This poster suggests that crossing in front of traffic is as dangerous as fighting a bull. The image, a visual metaphor, compares the power of the moving car and the charging bull by playing on some of their physical similarities. The car's aerials are _____, the headlights are its _____ and the car exhaust is _____.

The pedestrian is an unprotected matador; wearing only _____, and instead of his cape, _____.

However, the effect of the metaphor is most powerful through the differences which alert the reader to the risks of the situation.

The stance of the pedestrian (describe) _____ (state effect on reader)

_____. His age (describe and state effect) _____

_____.

His flimsy blood red jumper against the blue grey steel of the metal (state effect on reader) _____

_____. Instead of the open space of a bullring, this pedestrian 'matador' is confined. The vectors of

the kerb in the laneway convey (state effect on reader) _____.

The focus on the centre of the image combined with a vertical reading path creates the impression that _____

_____. This game is certainly not a fair sport!



1. Who is the targeted audience? How can you tell?
2. Do you think this poster (words and image) is clever? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Would this poster work as well in cultures where bull fighting is a popular sport? Explain.

Using all three posters

Compare all three texts and explain which you think is the most persuasive and why.