

2.1 Persuasion by emotional appeals

2.1.1 Shock tactics

Texts: radio advertisement and poster

An audience can often be persuaded once the composer has caught people's attention. Shock tactics can do this instantly by provoking powerful emotions. Disliking the images, sounds or words in an advertisement can be just as effective as being pleased by them. Common techniques for arousing an emotional response are incongruity, juxtaposition, contrast, startling images, vivid icons and exaggeration.

Vocabulary

Work with a partner to find the meaning of the advertising techniques mentioned in the introduction above. Record them in the table below. Look out for the use of these techniques as you study the texts in this section.

WORD	MEANING
Shock tactics	
Juxtaposition	
Contrast	
Startling images	
Vivid icons	
Exaggeration	
Incongruity	

Discussion activity

Think of an advertisement that you have seen recently that you do not like and describe it to your partner: Why did you not like it? What techniques did the advert use that made you dislike it?

Radio advertisement – Pinball

1. Listen to the radio advertisement.
2. What is the text trying to persuade you to do? Why?
3. Listen to the advertisement another two or three times to complete the listening cloze activity below.

If you're in a car or in a _____ accident and you're not wearing a _____, this is what can happen.

You can be _____ violently around the _____. Hitting the back of a seat, the _____, even another _____.

This can lead to serious _____ or even loss of _____. And, unlike _____ you don't get another go.

So, wear a seat belt at _____ times. No _____, no _____. A message from the RTA.

WORDS:

belt minor seat brains thrown life pinball injury belt cabin occupant windscreen all





4. Use a dictionary to check the meanings of any unfamiliar words.
5. Listen to the advertisement again, record what images you hear, see and feel.

HEAR	SEE	FEEL

6. Compare your images with a partner.
7. Consider the use of the slogan 'No belt, no brains' – what does it mean?
8. How does this radio advertisement use sound effects to shock the listener?
9. Create a visual text, meant to shock, using the pinball/car injury analogy.

Poster – Tattoo

1. After looking at the poster consider the title *Tattoo*. In your groups discuss:
 - a. What is a tattoo?
 - b. How do you get one?
 - c. Do you know anyone with a tattoo? Describe it.
 - d. Why do you think people get tattoos?
 - e. Would you get one? Explain.
2. Where would you expect to see a poster like this one?
3. What is its purpose?
4. Who is the intended audience for this poster?



5. What emotions does this visual stir in you?
6. What is the first thing in the poster that attracts your attention? Why?
7. What other features of the poster do you think the composer wants you to notice? How has it been constructed to achieve this? Refer to the framework: *Analysing visual texts* in your answer.
8. How does the slogan at the bottom of the poster relate to its subject?
9. Explain why the composer has used the idea of a tattoo to convey this message? How effective is it in making you think about road safety?
10. Choose a piece of music to go with this poster – explain what emotions you are trying to evoke.

Comparison

1. Did you find the radio advertisement or the poster more effective in conveying its message about road safety? In your answer refer to the techniques used in each text to persuade you.

2.1.2 Persuasion through praise and encouragement

Texts: posters

These two colourful posters target Indigenous people. They present positive aspects of community like sharing, being proud, acting responsibly as a group.

Poster – *Driving home safe and proud*

1. What aspects of the Indigenous community are praised? How are these relevant to the message of the poster?
2. List examples of inclusive language which are used to make the target audience feel comfortable with this message (include vocabulary choice as well as inclusive pronouns).
3. Explain how the photographs convey the notion of community/family. Think about the style/quality of the photos as well as their composition.
4. Comment on the significance of the major colours in this poster to Indigenous Australians.
5. Comment on the slogan 'Drink and don't drive'. Is this at odds with the first few paragraphs of the written text in this poster? What message do you think the slogan conveys?

Poster – *Drink and don't drive*

1. What aspects of praise are used in this poster?
2. Comment on the effectiveness of this graphic – be sure to use terms such as graphic style, colour, framing, mood and contrast (see *Analysing visual texts*). Think also about the quality of the photograph.
3. What underlying assumptions do you 'read' into this poster?
4. Compare this with the previous poster which also targets an audience of Indigenous people. Which do you find more effective? Why?

Composition

Make your own poster, conveying a similar message through the use of praise and encouragement. Use an image from the web or a coloured photo from a magazine or newspaper as your centerpiece. Vary the graphic style to appeal to your specific audience. Make up another slogan if you wish.



2.1.3 Persuasion by personal identification

a) through concrete detail

Texts: the *Bring the mob home safely* suite of radio advertisements

We identify with people and situations that we recognise. The use of detail is the key to this recognition.

In your groups

1. Listen closely to one of the advertisements in the *Bring the mob home safely* suite and identify how detail is being used to make the situation recognisable. Consider character; situation, choice of language and voice.
2. Map the structure of your advertisement and compare it to the maps of other groups in the class. What kinds of differences are there? Why might this be so?
3. Listen to other advertisements in the series and discuss the effects of the structure on the audience.
4. In a table, compare the radio advertisement with its corresponding brochure. What is gained by the change of medium and what is lost?

ADVERTISEMENT:

LANGUAGE FEATURE	RADIO	BROCHURE	GAINS/LOSSES

Composition

Using the structure and insights about language that you have gained from these activities, develop a radio advertisement and corresponding brochure for any text you are studying. You should write a scenario that illustrates a problem in that text, offer a solution, sum up the situation with friendly advice and finish with a slogan.

b) by empathy**Text: *Spoil, Dave, Son, and Going home* suite of radio advertisements**

This series of advertisements for radio are personal narratives, monologues and first person recounts about tragedy that has hit ordinary people due to road accidents.

These texts work on evoking empathy. If the responder can put themselves, imaginatively, in a similar position to the voices telling the stories, then they may learn vicariously through other people's mistakes.

1. Work with a partner to become familiar with the meaning of the terms underlined in the text above.
2. Listen to all four radio texts two or three times each.
3. Use the table below to note:
 - the language register of each text
 - how the content of each has been structured
 - your personal response.Use words such as *colloquial, informal, volume, stress, pause, pace, hesitation, contrast, anecdote, moral* and *slogan* in your analysis and provide examples.



TEXT	EXAMPLE: DAVE	SPOIL	SON	GOING HOME
Language	Colloquial language such as 'took off', 'lose a bloody day' is used to create an <i>authentic spoken register</i> with which young audiences can identify. The emotional <i>tone</i> is created by the <i>changes in volume</i> and <i>pace</i> of the voice as the speaker becomes distressed.			
Content and structure	The ad begins with a <i>personal narrative</i> by a young man talking about the results of a road accident caused by driver fatigue. This <i>contrasts</i> with a louder, stronger, <i>voice of authority</i> telling the responder, through the slogan 'Stop, Revive, Survive', that they have power to prevent such accidents. The <i>composer</i> of the message is mentioned last.			
Your response				

- Can you see a pattern in the way the ideas are arranged and the style and tone of language used? What is the effect of this pattern?
- How effective is the genre of personal narrative in evoking empathy in you? Does it appeal to you? Why?





Composition

In pairs

Think carefully about the situations outlined in these radio advertisements. Choose one scenario and try to empathise with the people who were involved. Develop and present to the class two role-plays where a passenger tries to stop a fatigued driver. Think about:

- what would be said
- what the driver's reaction would be
- how far the passenger would go.

Make the outcome of one role-play negative, where the driver dominates. Then work on a feasible way of getting a positive outcome, where the driver stops.

The class as the audience should analyse what forms of persuasion the passenger uses to change the driver's mind and why they are effective.

c) through omission or absence

Text: Notes suite of television advertisements

Many texts are effective because of their simplicity. The omissions in the *Notes* texts invite the responder to apply their own imaginative narrative, to fill in the gaps from their own experience, based on just a few clues. Making the scenes everyday ones and naming the young people – with names like people in your class – creates a familiar context for the audience. Sometimes less is more! If you view these texts as a series, you will see that there are common threads. All of these texts work by evoking empathy. Try to identify what messages the composers are conveying about our lifestyle and how the composers are aiming to persuade.

In your groups, look closely at the five *Notes* texts: *Fridge*, *Mobile*, *Table*, *Email* and *Post-it*.

1. Analyse the effectiveness of the visual composition of each using the framework, *Analysing visual texts*. To which points are the eyes drawn. What message is conveyed?
2. The writer of each note was in a hurry. List the synonyms for 'hurry' used in each.
3. The background music contrasts strongly with the content of each note. Describe the music used in these advertisements and its effect on the responder.
4. Draw up a Y CHART which describes the household in which the 'Note' was found – work on either *Fridge*, *Post-it* or *Table*. Describe what the home looks like, what it feels like and what it sounds like.
5. Explain the common context for this group of visuals. How easily do you identify with this situation?
6. Who do you think is the target audience for these texts? How do you know?

Composition

From the clues given in each text, establish a personality for Angie, Lee, Dan or one of the other road accident victims. Establish the kind of relationship they had with the person they left the note for.

Script the LAST conversation they had. What were the last words they said to each other? Make this conversation relevant to the busy lifestyle and the parent/child relationship hinted at in the text. Write about 20 lines.

Reflection

After completing these exercises reflect on the effectiveness of simplicity and realistic detail in conveying the tragedy of deaths caused by rushing and speeding on the road. What effect do the texts have on you? What are the texts asking us to do?