

2.2 Persuasion by appeals to reason

People can be persuaded to behave in a certain way when they are convinced that it is the best way to behave.

2.2.1 Give them the facts

Texts: brochures

Informative texts seek to enhance the audience's understanding of an issue and are based on the assumption that, given the facts, any reasonable and intelligent person can work out the safest way to behave. These texts are often didactic in tone and penalties are listed, threatening those who refuse to behave responsibly with fines and criminal convictions. This approach using facts, legal requirements and penalties is a common way of regulating the majority of people in a society. People, once made aware, in general obey the law. (Society even accepts that ignorance of the law is not an excuse to escape penalties for breaking the law.) One important question to ponder is: how effective are these texts in attracting their audience and communicating with them?

1. Use a dictionary or ask a classmate or your teacher to clarify any terms used in the explanation above that are new to you.
2. Can you think of some examples of texts that try to persuade by using factual information?

Zero limit – LPP brochure

The information on the front cover of this brochure is factual and specific.

The photograph of smiling, healthy, young people is attractive.

What message is conveyed by the image on the front? Choose from the following options:

- a. Attractive, young people do not drink alcohol.
- b. Young people are happy when they obey the law.
- c. You can have friends and fun without alcohol.
- d. These are all happy, young drivers.
- e. Other – explain.

Compare your answer with that of another student.

Inside the brochure there are photos of two of the young people from the front of the brochure. Read the writing in the green and red squares then answer the following questions:

- f. Has your view of these people changed? Why?
- g. Who is the intended audience for this brochure?
- h. How have features such as layout, colour and language been used to appeal to this audience?
- i. What assumed knowledge underlies this information?
- j. Have your views on drinking and driving changed after reading these two case studies? Give reasons for your response.

Research

Find out about the concepts of BMI (body mass index) and BAC to explain the differences between the time taken for Ben and Melita to achieve zero BAC.

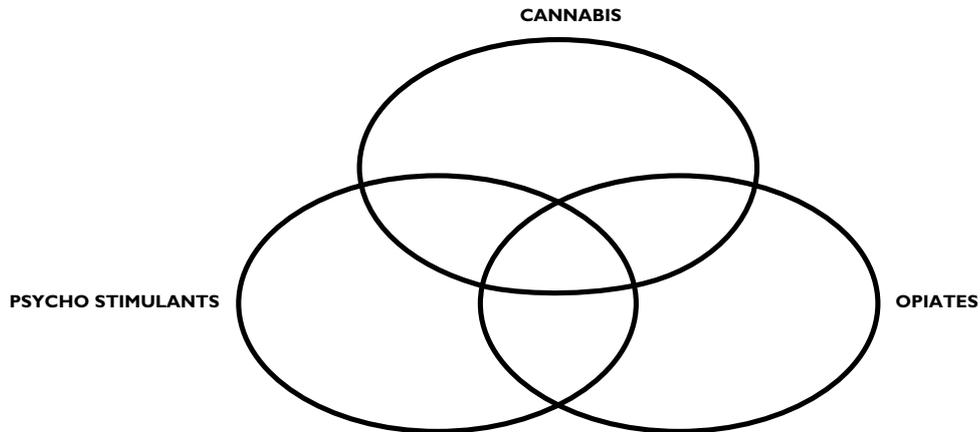




Drugs and driving brochure

- In your groups, read all sections of the brochure. Discuss the meanings of the following words as they have been used in the brochure:
 - opiates
 - withdrawal
 - impaired, impairment
 - multiplying effects
 - stimulants.
- Like many of the other RTA texts you have studied, this one uses a slogan to persuade. Can you identify it? What is the key word in this slogan? What are its two meanings? Why do you think it is effective in communicating to a teenage audience?
- Draw a Venn diagram* that shows the similarities and differences between the effects of drugs, in the three categories mentioned in the brochure on driving behaviours: Cannabis, Psycho stimulants, Opiates.

* A Venn diagram is a graphic organiser for finding areas of similarity and difference. Insert the relevant information from the brochures into the appropriate section of the diagram.



- Using your Venn diagram as a guide, what is clear about the effects of ALL drugs on driving behaviour?
- Why are some of the images in the brochure blurred and others clearly defined?
- What was the clearest message you received from the brochure?
- How does this brochure aim to persuade? Use the framework *Analysing visual texts* to explain.
- How effective do you think it is in influencing behaviour? Give your reasons.

Text: *Driving and medicines brochure*

- Compare this brochure with the *Drugs and driving brochure*. Which do you find more effective? Why?
- Create a 'Warning' poster for a doctor's waiting room based on the information in this brochure. Consider your audience(s) carefully when choosing techniques to persuade them to change their behaviour. Refer to the framework *Analysing visual texts*.
- Re-design the yellow and red warning labels for medicine bottles and packets. Try to make them more eye-catching. Consider universal symbols such as the red triangle.

Using all THREE of the brochures:

1. Create a 'real life' dramatic role-play or scripted scenario in which people your age have to make decisions about who will take responsibility for NOT driving under the influence of drugs (including alcohol). Present the behaviour of the drug-affected person and the issues that need to be resolved, then the resolution. Make this as realistic to your world as you can.
2. Why do you think the RTA chose the medium of a brochure to convey this information and not a dramatised television advertisement or a poster? Use the table below to organise your ideas about the differences in these media.

	BROCHURE	TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENT	POSTER
Content			
Audience appeal			
Context of response			

3. Reflection: To what extent has this information been persuasive enough to influence your behaviour?



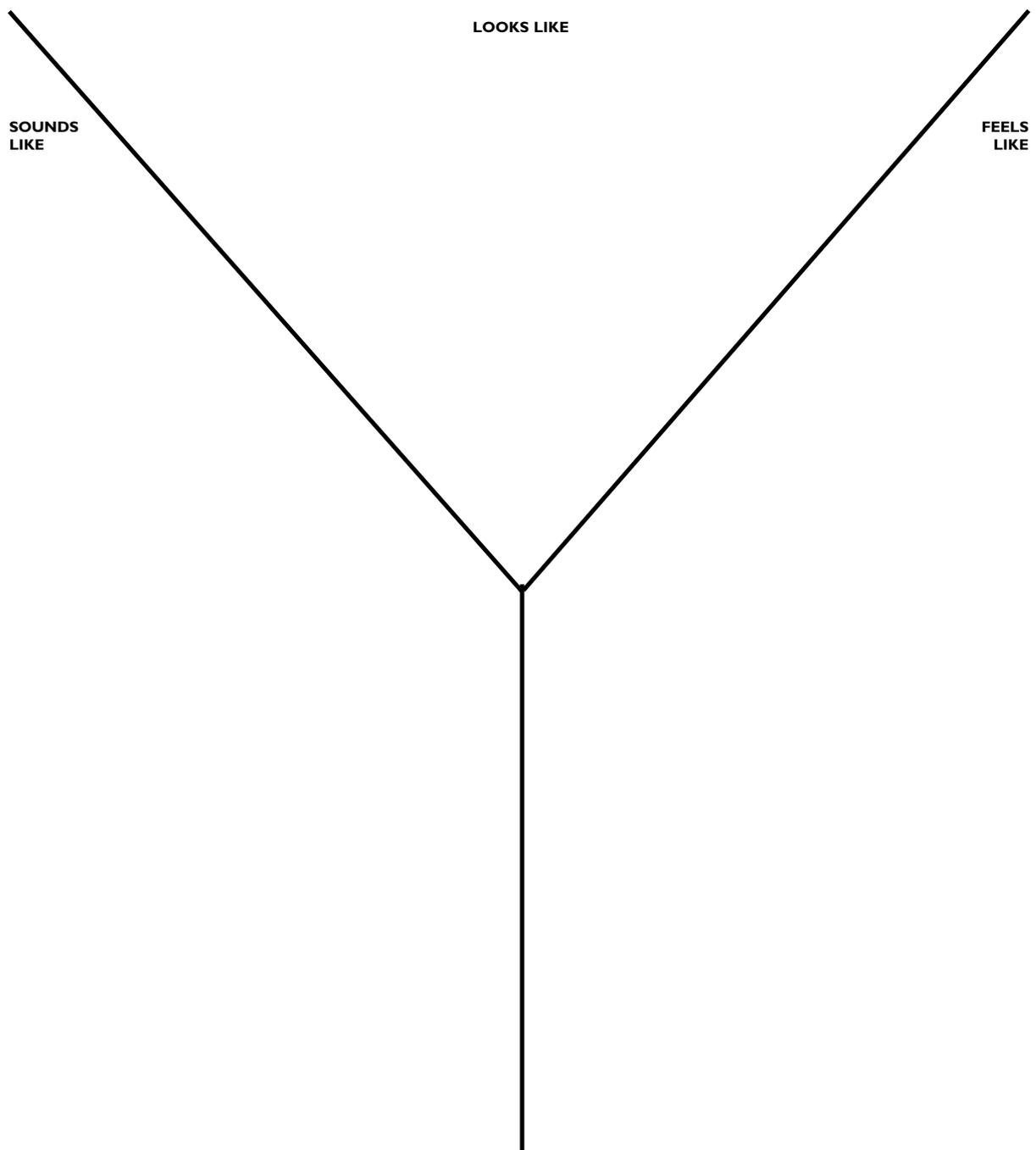
2.2.2 Dazzle them with science and technology

Text: *Drink drive brain* television advertisement

This advertisement is informative and technical. However, it persuades through making the scientific information acceptable to a general audience through a 'manly' voice-over and the familiar setting of the Aussie pub scene.

1. Watch the advertisement a couple of times and then analyse it using the framework *Analysing visual texts*.
2. Examine the country pub setting and atmosphere using a 'Y CHART'.

COUNTRY PUB



1. Create another scenario, which involves a different setting and another type of person. Instead of the 30-40 year old, country, working-class bloke in a pub, make up a storyboard for a television advertisement involving people in another familiar setting. Try to convey the same message as the RTA's *Drink drive brain* film.

You can refer to the document *Drink drive brain* storyboard as an example.

2. Draw a detailed diagram of your new set.
3. Explain in a paragraph why the setting is important in relation to reaching the intended audience and how design elements represent this.
4. Comment on the pun 'You're gone'.
5. How does this film persuade by using scientific information? How effective is the special effect of the visible brain?

2.2.3 Impress them with celebrity/authority

Texts: *Microsleep* and *Circadian rhythms* television advertisements on driver fatigue

A lot of magazines and newspapers are 'sold' by celebrities. Public perception often associates a television or film actor with the roles that they play. A glamorous star will endorse beauty products, with the hidden message that if you want to be like the star you should use the endorsed product. The RTA has used a celebrity scientist to explain the 'facts' about microsleeps in a way that ordinary (non-scientific) people will understand. Because the public trusts Dr Karl's knowledge and understanding, they are more likely to trust the RTA message. There are also other persuasive elements at work.

1. Find the meaning of the words celebrity and endorse in the dictionary. Use a thesaurus to find synonyms for celebrity.
2. Why do advertisers use celebrities to endorse products?
3. Tell a classmate about a celebrity you like who you've noticed endorsing a product in an advertisement on TV, radio or magazine.

Television advertisements: *Microsleep* and *Circadian rhythms*

1. After viewing the television advertisement *Microsleep* two or three times, do a paired interview.

One of you is to talk about the information presented in the advertisement:

- a. What is a microsleep?
- b. What scientific message did you receive about driver fatigue?

The other partner is to talk about how Dr Karl presents that information by considering his use of:

- direct eye contact, body language, hand gestures
- language
- tone, volume and pace of voice.

2. Why is this advertisement particularly effective when shown on a small screen in a family home?
3. What emotional elements are used in the scenes showing what may happen with a microsleep?
4. Now look at *Circadian rhythms*. Describe the lighting and its effect.
5. Why is one film shot in the day and the other at night? How does this strengthen the message?
6. Comment on the effect of Dr Karl's costume – does it add to the message? How?
7. Again, Dr Karl uses his voice in a deliberate way to persuade. Watch the advertisement again and list the words he stresses. Why are they important?
8. Look at the slogan – STOP, REVIVE, SURVIVE. What does it mean?
9. This slogan has been used many times by the RTA. If it becomes worn out and clichéd, what would you replace it with? Think about the rhyme and rhythm – can you create another catchy slogan?

