



# Media

## Lights, camera, action!



Describes how television advertisements can influence food choices.

### Prior knowledge and lesson preparation

- In groups of 3, children list TV food ads they can easily recall and offer reasons as to why they were easy to recall (eg jingles, music, cartoon characters, familiar famous people, strong adjectives). Groups share common discussion themes with the class.
- Children consider reasons why ad companies use these tactics and the effect these marketing strategies have on them?

### Focus inquiry

#### Data collection at home

Please note parental permission and assistance may be needed for younger children to complete this inquiry.

- Using the proforma on page 69, children choose a night of the week and television channel to view half an hour of television between 4pm–5pm and record:
  - > the number of food ads appearing
  - > whether the ad is for *healthy (everyday)* foods or *sometimes* foods
  - > how the advertisement attempted to grab their attention
  - > how they felt about the ad.
- At the end of the data collection period, in groups of 3, children share and discuss their findings and draw conclusions about food advertising on television. Summarise findings through a class discussion. (For older children synthesise ideas including a class *word wall* that includes a list of convincing adjectives used in commercials eg sensational, exciting, delicious, creamy, distinctive, fantastic, generous, heavenly).

### Further inquiry

- Where relevant, interview the school canteen manager to find out whether or not

certain healthy foods are selling well at school.

- In groups of 3, children plan an advertising campaign to promote these foods (eg creating posters to place around the school using the words from the *word wall*, placing advertisements in the school newsletter, recess and lunch time town criers wearing sandwich boards, creating a visual presentation to be played at assembly using music and jingles, cartoon characters, testimonials).
- At the end of the advertising campaign, children evaluate the campaign, develop a spread sheet to represent sales data and prepare a report for the school newsletter.

### Appetiser!

#### Did you know?

A 2007 study<sup>1</sup> showed that on average Australian children aged 8 to 17 watch almost two hours of free-to-air television per day and that 20% of children have a TV in their bedroom.

55–81% of foods advertised during children’s TV viewing times were for foods that dietary guidelines recommend children consume only *sometimes*<sup>2</sup>.

Children under the age of eight years do not understand the persuasive intent of advertising.

Some of the techniques used to attract attention and increase desire for a product include:

- > give-away offers, prizes, competitions
- > jingles
- > cartoon characters
- > famous sporting or media personalities
- > images of fun, happiness, excitement
- > suggesting the product makes you special or superior to others.

1. Australian Government, Australian Communications and Media Authority. *Media and Communications in Australian Families 2007, Report of the Media and Society Research Project, 2007.*

2. Obesity Policy Coalition, *Food advertising legislation blueprint*, [www.opc.org.au](http://www.opc.org.au)

### Australian Curriculum exemplar links

**English: Literacy:** Interacting with others [ACELY1656, ACELY1667, ACELY1784, ACELY1789] **Language:** Language for interaction [ACELA1461, ACELA1787]

**Maths: Statistics & Probability:** Data representation and interpretation [ACMSPO69, ACMSP263]

#### General Capabilities

Literacy, Critical and creative thinking, Numeracy, ICT competence, Ethical behaviour

#### Websites to support inquiry

##### Food advertising and children:

[www.fatfreetv.com.au](http://www.fatfreetv.com.au)

[junkbusters.com.au](http://junkbusters.com.au)

<http://cfac.net.au/>

[www.opc.org.au](http://www.opc.org.au)

**Food advertising to children information and a school resource will be available shortly on the SA Health website**

[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au)

# Food advertising

*\*Younger children may need assistance to complete this inquiry.*

Name of food	Type of food <i>(tick)</i> Healthy <i>(everyday)</i> / Discretionary <i>foods</i>		Attention grabber <i>(tick)</i> Jingle / Cartoon / Music / Having fun / Other				How did the ad make you feel?

Name ..... Date ..... Channel .....

## Zooming in on advertising

Identifies the different strategies used by the media to influence food choices.



### Prior knowledge and lesson preparation

- In groups of 3, children discuss and list strategies they have seen advertising companies use to grab viewer attention on TV. Report to class.
- View examples of television food commercials targeted towards children (Saturday mornings, or weekdays 4pm–5pm) and food ads from magazines or newspapers, in groups of 3, children:
  - > brainstorm and discuss different strategies advertising companies use to engage children with their products eg jingles, music, cartoon characters, famous people, strong adjectives, happy faces, special offers (eg toy with meal).
  - > share their findings and develop a class list of the different techniques and strategies used.
  - > discuss how these techniques and strategies make you feel about the products advertised? Do they make you feel that you *must* buy the products?
  - > discuss why is it good for the advertising companies if their advertisements make you want to buy their product?

### Appetiser!

#### Did you know?

- > Children are a key target audience for food manufacturers, as there are proportionally more ads for unhealthy foods during TV shows that are most popular with children.
- > Current regulations to protect children generally apply to advertisements screened during TV shows rated C (for children) and P (for preschoolers). However the peak viewing period for children under 14 years old is 5–9pm when up to 500,000 children watch TV, and when unhealthy food and drink ads are also most frequent.
- > Advertising influences children's food preferences which undermines parents' efforts to provide their children with a healthy diet.
- > The balance of ads for healthy and unhealthy food groups is well out of proportion to healthy eating guidelines. Nearly 1 in 4 Australian children are overweight or obese.

Source: [www.parentsjury.org.au](http://www.parentsjury.org.au)

(Continued on page 71)

### Australian Curriculum exemplar links

**English: Literacy:** Interacting with others [ACELY1667, ACELY1789, ACELY1656]

**Language:** Language for interaction [ACELA1461]

**Maths: Statistics and Probability:** Data Representation and interpretation [ACMSP069, ACMSP263]

### General Capabilities

Literacy, Critical and creative thinking, Numeracy, ICT competence, Ethical behaviour

### Websites to support inquiry

#### Food advertising and children:

[www.fatfreetv.com.au](http://www.fatfreetv.com.au)

[www.parentsjury.org.au](http://www.parentsjury.org.au)

[junkbusters.com.au](http://junkbusters.com.au)

[www.opc.org.au](http://www.opc.org.au)

#### Advertising Jingles

[www.funtrivia.com/en/subtopics/Australian-Advertising-Jingles-197602.html](http://www.funtrivia.com/en/subtopics/Australian-Advertising-Jingles-197602.html)

#### Famous Australian jingle

[alldownunder.com/australian-food/aeroplane-jelly.htm](http://alldownunder.com/australian-food/aeroplane-jelly.htm)

**Food advertising to children information and a school resource will be available shortly on the SA Health website**

[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au)

## Zooming in on advertising *continued*

### Focus inquiry

#### Healthy take-away!

##### Home research

Follow up activity to encourage family discussion. Using the TV food advertisement investigation on page 72, children invite their family to select a food advertisement on television and complete the investigation.

##### Follow up

- Children summarise the information collected to share in class discussion including:
  - > knowledge they have gained from the activity.
  - > how this knowledge will assist them in making food choices.

- > categorising food products advertised into separate sections of *The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* (AGHE).
- > including data collected in a summative class chart.
- > preparing a spreadsheet to graphically represent and draw conclusions from the combined data.

### Further inquiry

Advertising companies often attract children's interest to their product by creating characters that are associated with their product or brand.

- In groups of 3, children brainstorm a list of these *characters* and add to a class list. Children identify what they like best (*the market appeal*) about each of these characters.

- Children then choose a favourite healthy food and create a food character to represent their food based on similar *market appeal* strategies used on TV ads including a catchy jingle or slogan.
- Working in groups of 3–4, children create a commercial to promote and increase the popularity of a specific vegetable using techniques and strategies that advertisers use to make the food as desirable as possible. Identify the positive elements of this food that should be promoted including reasons why people should eat this food.



# TV food advertising investigation

Name ..... Date .....

What is the food being advertised?

Describe the characters in the commercial. (eg How old are they?  
Are they male or female?)

What are the characters doing in the advertisement?

How is this food made to look attractive?

What groups of people are encouraged to buy this food?

Is there a slogan in the advertisement? If so what is it?

Where does it fit into *The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*?

Would you buy this product? Why/why not?

Adapted from: Department of Nutrition and Physical Activity, Western Australia. (2005). *Crunch and sip curriculum activities for middle primary*.

## Turning up the heat on TV ads



Critically analyses media influences on food choices.

### Prior knowledge and lesson preparation

- In groups of 3, students discuss and revisit strategies used in television advertising and share in a class discussion. (Refer pages 68–71).

### Focus inquiry

- Refer *Advertising Strategies in Full* <http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/adversmarts-introduction-food-advertising-online>
- Consider other strategies used in food advertising. Have you heard of a *food stylist*?
- View *Buy Me That 3! A Kid's Guide to Food Advertising part 3 Lights, Action, Burger* [www.google.com.au/search?q=buy+me+that+3](http://www.google.com.au/search?q=buy+me+that+3)
- After viewing, in groups of 3, students consider:
  - > their personal feelings about the tricks, techniques and strategies used in food commercials.
  - > guidelines they would like to suggest to restrict false advertising eg informing viewers where food has been altered to look more desirable.
  - > other ways people are misled when they see ads in magazines and newspapers.
  - > advertisers viewpoint in justifying a *food stylist*.
- Class observes advertising strategies used in a collection of taped food commercials including the food group to which each belongs according to *The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* (AGHE). Groups then consider:
  - > the terms *energy-dense, nutrient-poor, discretionary food, junk foods*.
  - > the level of success of the advertising strategies.
  - > how important it is to be aware of the advertising strategies used in making

decisions about purchasing food and drink products.

- > other considerations eg whether or not the food is a healthy choice.

### Appetiser!

Advertising companies use a variety of strategies to encourage consumers to buy their products. Often, they try to sell a *lifestyle*, or an *image*, rather than their product.

In groups, students discuss these strategies and give examples.

- > **Ideal kids and families** Ideal families are always attractive and pleasant, they have big happy smiles and care for each other.
- > **Family fun** Mum or dad brings home the right food and the dinner turns into a party.
- > **Excitement** One bite of a snack bar and you're having the time of your life on some exotic island.
- > **Star power** Your favourite sports star is telling you what to eat.
- > **Bandwagon** Join the cool crowd, don't be left out.
- > **Scale** The product looks bigger or smaller than it actually is.
- > **Music and jingles** Music and other sound effects add to the excitement. Jingles ensure you remember the product.
- > **Repetition** You hear the same ad over and over.
- > **Animated characters** Attach a character to a product and children's interest increases.
- > **Misleading words** Such as *The taste of real, natural, because we care*.
- > **Misleading messages** When you eat a product, you become a cool person doing amazing things.
- > **Freebies** Free give-aways, prizes to be won, tokens to collect.

(Continued on page 74)

### Australian Curriculum exemplar links

**English: Literacy:** Interacting with others, Interpreting, analysing, evaluating, Texts in context [ACELY1816, ACELY1710, ACELY1713, ACELY1765, ACELY1720, ACELY1724] **Language:** Expressing and developing ideas [ACELA1764] **Literature:** Responding to literature [ACELT1621]

**Maths: Statistics and Probability:** Data representation and interpretation

### General Capabilities

Literacy, Critical and creative thinking, Numeracy, ICT competence, Ethical behaviour

### Websites to support inquiry

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## Turning up the heat on TV ads *continued*

### Further inquiry

- Consider writing a letter to your local Member of Parliament outlining the proposition that television food advertising directed toward children should be banned. Outline marketing *tricks* used by advertisers, the type of food products we mostly see in the television advertising and the health risks associated with eating energy dense nutrient poor food and snacks.
- Publish letters in the school newsletter or Blog page.
- Create a multi-media campaign to educate and inform younger children at school about food commercials.

### Healthy take-away!

Encourage parents to join the *Parent's Jury* and *Junkbusters*. These sites provide a forum for parents to voice their views and to collectively advocate for positive change around children's food and physical activity issues.

[www.parentsjury.org.au](http://www.parentsjury.org.au)  
[junkbusters.com.au](http://junkbusters.com.au)





## Case Study

# Community counts at Yankalilla Area School



Yankalilla Area School, which services the surrounding community, is nestled in an idyllic setting 75 km south of Adelaide on the Fleurieu Peninsula. The 350 children from R–12 in this rural setting have diverse needs and this is equally true when it comes to eating!

Since they began their healthy eating journey 11 years ago, they have gradually shifted towards a whole school healthy eating policy based on *Right Bite*. They are the first to admit that it has been a gradual but rewarding journey.

The school has instigated a range of initiatives in their drive to eat well and be active. Most recently a student *Eat Well Be Active* forum was established, comprising two children from each class. This forum will advise and assist the school in their whole school and community approach toward healthy eating and physical activity. Stephanie Mc Pharlin (Reception/1 teacher) leads this fantastic initiative in the school.

The Governing Council chairperson approached the principal with the suggestion that the school approach the local butcher to make sausages that met the *Right Bite* nutrient criteria requirements. The butcher was more than willing to oblige.

**The sausage sizzle was a great success and the school has made a commitment to continuing to provide a healthy sausage sizzle at future events.**

Parents commented favourably to the local butcher and as Charlotte, a Year 2 student commented, "They were yummy. I had two."



**In 2011 the traditional Sports Day fundraiser, the ever-popular sausage sizzle, provided a challenge to this whole school philosophy.**



