

Media's influence on us

Lesson 7



Explain what persuasion is and how it works

Lesson Objective

The children should be able to explain what persuasion is and how it works.

Learning Outcome

Explain what persuasion is and how it works. Select at least one way to persuade someone to do or think something. Associate persuasion with advertising.

Teacher's Note

We're surrounded by lots of media, it has a real influence on us. But it's important to remember that most media are trying to sell something to us. For example, an advertisement may make us smile or tell us a good story, but it's also trying to persuade us to buy or do something.

Resources

- *Media's Influence on Us* video

Methodology

- Talk and discussion: Irish is Best
 - Collaborative learning: Persuade Me Game
 - Skills through content: The New Toy (Story Time); What's the Message?; *Media's Influence on Us* video
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Procedure

Step 1: Irish is Best

- Ask the children to tell you about their favourite school subject.

The children might suggest any subject they enjoy.

- Attempt to persuade the children that Irish is in fact the best subject – it's a unique language, only spoken widely in Ireland, it's great to be able to speak another language with their friends, etc.
 - Ask the children if their opinion has changed?
 - Explain to the children that you were trying to persuade them to change their mind.
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Step 2: Story Time

- Explain to children that persuasion means to talk someone into doing or thinking something.
- Ask the children if they would like to hear a story about Ronan.

The New Toy

Ronan was very excited. He was on the way to the toy shop. He had saved his pocket money for weeks and weeks and today he was going to buy a new toy. When he got into the shop he headed straight to the new toy section. There was so much to choose from. After a few minutes he picked up a racing car. This was it. This was going to be his new toy. He looked around, beside him a girl his age was staring at his racing car. "You're not going to buy that are you?" she said, "No one plays with racing cars anymore." Ronan was confused. He enjoyed playing with racing cars. Maybe he shouldn't. The girl continued: "Everyone is playing with building blocks now. You should buy a new set of building blocks." Ronan looked at the new racing car, and then he looked at the box of building blocks. What should he do?

- Ask the children why Ronan was in the toy shop?
 - Ask the children where did he get the money to buy a new toy?
 - Ask the children what did Ronan decide to buy?
 - Ask what did the girl try to persuade Ronan to do?
 - Ask if the girl was right to give her opinion?
 - Ask the children what should Ronan do? Should he buy the racing car or should he buy the building blocks?
 - Explain to the children that people try to persuade us to do or think something all the time – our friends, our families.
 - Explain that advertisements try to persuade us to think something or to buy something.
 - Ask the children if they have ever been persuaded to think something or to buy something by an advertisement.
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Procedure continued

Step 3: Persuade Me Game

- Survey the children on their favourite breakfast cereal, sweets or sport. Record the results (and create a simple graph if possible to display the results).
- Using the results ask the children which is the most popular breakfast cereal, sweets or sport; which is the least popular breakfast cereal, sweets or sport; how many people like the other breakfast cereals, sweets or sports?
- Pick the top three results and divide the class into three teams. The teacher can sit in the centre of the room as a neutral party.
- Each team must convince the teacher that their breakfast cereal, sweets or sport is the best.
- Explain to the children that there are lots of ways to persuade someone – pointing out the good points in one things, or the flaws in another, saying that one thing is cooler than another, etc.
- The teacher could model the persuasion process, to encourage the teams.
- The teacher can prompt the children with persuasive ideas during the activity.
- During feedback time, ask the children what are the best ways to persuade someone to agree with them. Take a note of any suggestions.

Step 4: What is the message?

- As a whole class activity watch the advertisements from the MediaWise website, www.MediaWise.ie
- After each advertisement, ask the children if the advertisement is trying to persuade us into doing or thinking something?
- Ask the children what each advertisement is trying to persuade us to do or think?
- Ask the children if they feel they should do or think something simply because an advertisement is trying to persuade them to?
- Ask the children if they have ever been persuaded to do or think something by an advertisement they have seen?
- Explain to the children that they should make their own decision on what they should do and think.
- Explain to the children that advertising will try to persuade them to do lots of things but it is important to make their own decisions.

Step 5: Media's Influence on Us Video

- Tell the children that they are going to watch a short video about the influence of the media.
- Play the *Media's Influence on Us* video from the MediaWise website, www.MediaWise.ie
- After the movie, ask the children if they can remember any of the things media is trying to do.
- Explain to the children that they will continue to learn about the influence of the media, but in the meantime they should keep an eye and ear out for any media or advertising that tries to persuade them to do or think something.



Video