

Political Ad Analysis Activity

Note for Educators: Utilizing the Political Ad Analysis Worksheet

Objective: To enable students to comprehensively and critically analyze political ads, discerning their elements, strategies, and effects.

1. **Pre-Activity Preparation:** Choose Ads, Form Groups.
 - a. Pre-Activity Preparation Note: Select ads in advance or assign specific ones to students based on your prior review.
2. **Guiding the Analysis:** Ensure understanding of each section and online tools.
3. **Facilitating Discussions:** Encourage group and class-wide discussions.
4. **Reflection and Extension:** Facilitate reflection and consider extension activities.
5. **Assessment and Feedback:** Evaluate and provide constructive feedback.
6. **Ethical and Respectful Discourse:** Ensure respectful and ethical discussions.

OBJECTIVE:

The main goal of this activity is to enhance students' critical thinking and analytical skills in the context of political advertising. It aims to empower students to:

- Analyze political ads effectively.
- Assess the impact of visual and auditory elements on message conveyance.
- Evaluate the credibility of advertisers.
- Understand the influence of ad spending on reach and effectiveness.



The overarching goal is to equip students with the ability to critically engage with political advertisements, make informed judgments, and become more discerning consumers of political information.

WHY?:

We are doing this activity to:

- Boost critical thinking skills.
- Enhance media literacy.
- Encourage informed citizenship.
- Develop digital literacy.
- Foster reflection on political advertising's impact.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Before proceeding, carefully read the following information, which provides essential context and guidelines for this activity.

Types of Political Ads: Familiarize yourself with different types of political ads and persuasive techniques. For example:

- Negative: Unfavorable portrayal of another candidate.
- Warm and Fuzzy: Elicits positive feelings about the candidate/campaign.
- Biography & Vision: Emphasizes the candidate's life or vision for the future.
- Humorous: Aims to make viewers laugh or smile.
- Scary: Evokes fear or concern.
- Advocacy: Advocates for/against a certain position or issue.
- Trust: Seeks to establish the candidate as trustworthy.

Techniques to Consider

Appeals to fear/prejudice, bandwagon, card stacking, fancy figures, flattery/insincerity, glittering generality, image transfer, loaded words, name-calling, negativity, presenting inferences as facts, quotes out of context, repetition, rumor-mongering, warm and fuzzy image, catchy words/phrases.

Additional Notes: Understand the significance of visual and auditory elements, as well as online tools. Colors, Superimposed Words, Props, Code Words, People, Music, Symbols, Clothing can all be crucial in conveying messages and evoking emotions in political ads.

Online Tools: Learn about tools like the *Facebook Ad Library* and *Media Bias Fact Check*.

Online Tools

Facebook Ad Library: Use to check ad spending, reach, and frequency.

Media Bias Fact Check: Use to check the credibility rating of the advertiser (if available).

2. Now, view the assigned political ad.
3. Use this worksheet to analyze various aspects of the ad.
4. Utilize online tools like the Facebook Ad Library and Media Bias Fact Check for additional insights.
5. Engage in group discussions and share your findings.

AD DETAILS:

Advertiser: _____

Platform (where it was seen/heard): _____

Type of Ad: _____ (Negative, Warm & Fuzzy, Biography & Vision, Humorous, Scary, Advocacy, Trust - Circle one or more)additional insights.

Engage in group discussions and share your findings.

AD ANALYSIS TABLE:

Aspect to Analyze	Explanation and Considerations
WHERE (Platform)	Identify where the ad was found (e.g., Facebook,TV). Consider the platform's reach and demographic.
WHEN (Time Aired)	Note when the ad was aired. Consider its timing in relation to events or voting periods.
AUDIENCE (Target Demographic)	Identify the ad's intended audience. Consider factors like age, location, and interests.
SPONSOR (Who Funded)	Identify who funded the ad. Explore more about the sponsor and their interests.

<p>IMAGES & SOUNDS (Visual & Auditory Elements)</p>	<p>Analyze visual and auditory elements. Consider their impact on message and emotion conveyance.</p>
<p>TECHNIQUES (Fear, Bandwagon, etc.)</p>	<p>Identify persuasive techniques used. Consider their impact on different audiences.</p>
<p>AD SPEND & CREDIBILITY (From FB Ad Library & Media Bias Fact Check)</p>	<p>Analyze ad spend data and check credibility rating. Consider correlations between ad spend, reach, and credibility.</p>

REFLECTION:

- Key takeaways from this analysis.
- Surprising elements or strategies used in the ad.
- How this ad might influence its target demographic.

Cited Source:

Content and structure of this worksheet were adapted from [Frank W. Baker's Media Literacy Clearinghouse](https://www.frankwbaker.com/media-literacy-clearinghouse/).

The concept of analyzing ad spending using online tools is based on information from Facebook's Ad Library. <https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/>



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