

Advertising and Consumption of as Progress
Examining American Advertisements, 1900-1920

Essential Question –

“Based on one’s examination of various advertisements from the Progressive Era, specifically the 1920’s to what degree does this decade appear to be prosperous one? Secondly, which Americans or social class(es) shared in the prosperity? Also, what role did advertising and installment buying play in the development of the consumer culture? Finally, how was the popular culture of the Progressive Era specifically the 1920s relate to economic change?”

Instruction Time –

One double block period and one 55 minute single block period, 3days

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks –

USII.8 Analyze the origins of Progressivism and important Progressive leaders, and summarize the major accomplishments of Progressivism. (H, E)

Grade Level and Course -

11th Grade, US II, Reconstruction to the Present

Lesson Overview –

In this particular lesson, students will first read and respond to the three general discussion questions about the nature of their own modern, 21st century consumer culture. Student responses will be discussed. Following the first set of discussion questions the instructor will facilitate a lecture on the psychological approach to advertising in the Progressive Era, specifically the 1920’s. The lecture will also introduce the clear distinctions between advertising and the consumer culture of today in contrast with the advertising of the Progressive Era, the 1920’s and pre-1920’s. Students will then respond to a second set of discussion questions and student responses will be discussed as a collective class. Finally, students will view a five different advertisement from the Progressive Era. As students analyze the five ads they will answer six questions. Students will respond to each question one by one with each of the five advertisements. Student responses will be discussed. Finally, student will be asked to assemble in small cooperative learning teams to generate a logical and historically based answer to the essential question, “Based on one’s examination of various advertisements from the Progressive Era, specifically the 1920’s to what degree does this decade appear to be prosperous one? Secondly, which Americans or social class(es) shared in the prosperity? Also, what role did advertising and installment buying play in the development of the consumer culture? Finally, how was the popular culture of the Progressive Era specifically the 1920s relate to economic change?” Student answers will be displayed and discussed and should be clearly connected to their earlier examination of the five advertisement from the Progressive Era.

Lesson Objectives –

In this lessons students will:

- answer and discuss general discussion question about modern advertising and today's consumer culture
- actively listen and engage in a lecture on Advertising and Consumer Culture, pre-1920's, the 1920's and finally today
- examine and analyze five advertisements from the Progressive Era, specifically the 1920's
- use their examinations of analysis of the five advertisement to respond to the following essential questions "Based on one's examination of various advertisements from the Progressive Era, specifically the 1920's to what degree does this decade appear to be prosperous one? Secondly, which Americans or social class(es) shared in the prosperity? Also, what role did advertising and installment buying play in the development of the consumer culture? Finally, how was the popular culture of the Progressive Era specifically the 1920s relate to economic change?"
- discuss and share findings

Resources and Materials –

- Handout, Discussion Questions set 1 and 2
- Handout, Advertisements, five total
- Handout, Advertising and Consumption of Progress

Assessment -

Students will be assessed in the following areas:

- Ability to logical respond and discuss their responses to discussion questions set 1 and 2
- Examination and analysis of five advertisement from the Progressive Era to respond to questions
- Infusion of knowledge gained during discussion sets, lecture and examination and analysis of advertisement to answer essential questions

Follow – Up Activity –

Have students select a product that is used today and during the Progressive Era. Have them research their product, past and present and create an advertisement as it would have appeared in the past, the Progressive Era and an advertisement of how it would appear today in the 21st century.

Advertising and the 1920's
Discussion Questions – Set 1

1. In one word or briefly describe what type of society you live in? Students may chat with other students in the classroom to develop responses. Please list your response below.

2. Do you think that students/teenagers as well as adults worry about how others will judge their personality and appearance? Support your response with a concrete example, logic or reason. List your response below.

3. Today, in our American society, do you think personality and appearance is more important than character? Again, support your response with concrete evidence, logic or reason. List your response below.

Advertising and the 1920's

Psychologists were used to create advertising in order to:

- become more persuasive to consumers.
- brand corporate consumerism.
- promote their values to both business and society as progressive material and corporate progress.
- create a new “modern” civilization of style using large and fashionable imagery.

Pre-1920's – Inner – Directed

I will improve my life by:

- working harder.
- being more disciplined.
- doing the right thing.

The 1920's and Today??? – Outer – Directed

I will improve my life by:

- being funny.
- wearing the right clothes.
- talking about the right things.

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1. How is this ad trying to persuade consumers to buy the product?

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

2. To which social class(es) does the ad appeal?

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

3. To which ethnic groups does the ad primarily appeal?

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

4. How, if at all, are blacks portrayed in the ad?

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

5. How, if at all, are women portrayed in the ad?

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

6. How could a wise consumer avoid letting the ad talk him/her into buying something he/she doesn't need?

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

