

# How Advertising Portrays Animals

Suggested Grade Level: Middle School

Relative Subject(s): Social Studies

## OBJECTIVE

To observe the messages regarding the treatment and portrayal of animals in advertising through a variety of media. To be able to distinguish which messages are positive and which are negative, and how they affect the choices we make.

## MATERIALS

- Various types of magazines
- Various types of newspapers
- Several large poster boards
- Glue, scissors, markers

## ACTIVITY

### *Preliminary Discussion*

- What is advertising?
- Where do we see or hear advertising?
- Who reads watches and listens to advertising?
- What does advertising try to accomplish?
- Why are animals included or featured in advertising?
- What kinds of products would animals help to sell or publicize?

### *Procedure*

Students will look through magazines and newspapers for advertisements that feature or include animals, then cut them out and paste them in "Negative" or "Positive" categories on the poster boards. Students can also watch television or listen to the radio at home and write descriptions of commercials they see or hear which feature or include animals.

### *Post-Discussion*

- What types of ads did they find, see or hear?
- What message is each ad sending?
- How do these messages affect how our society treats animals?
- How have these ads affected the students' past treatment of animals?
- Why do advertisers find it necessary to portray animals in a negative light?
- How could the negative ads be changed to become positive?

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Have students create their own advertisements for fictional products, which feature or include animals in a positive light and present them to the rest of the class.

Nebraska Humane Society  
8929 Fort Street Omaha, NE 68134 402.444.7800 [www.nehumanesociety.org](http://www.nehumanesociety.org)