

Big Ads for the Big Game

Written by mlmoment

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The Super Bowl is known for airing the most expensive commercials of the new season, often costing more than four million dollars per minute during the big game. From cars to unused phone data, the advertisements try to appeal to the audience on an emotional basis – to pull at our heartstrings with puppies, children and celebrities. And now that the statistics are available for review, let's take a minute to ask *what's the big deal?*

Explore the reasons why so much effort and expense go into this one day for advertisers.

AHA! A huge audience means lots of eyeballs seeing the brands, and brand recognition means money!

Grade Level: 6-8

Key Question #5: Why is this message being sent? (Key Word: Purpose)

Core Concept #5: Most messages are sent to gain profit and/or power

Key Question #3: How might different people understand this message differently? (Key Word: Audience)

Core Concept #3: Different people understand the same message differently

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Materials: Internet links to two or three Super Bowl ads and a projection screen. We recommend the *Advertising Age* site as they have background information about most ads that ran during the Super Bowl: <http://adage.com/article/special-report-super-bowl/super-bowl-xlix-ad-chart-buying-big-game-commercials/295841/> or for additional videos, try <http://www.ispot.tv/events/super-bowl-commercials>

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Activity: View the ads as a class before revealing the costs for air time. Ask your students why a company would spend 4 million dollars to show a one-minute ad. Then tell them the size of the viewing audience (averaging 114.4 million viewers per minute on NBC's Sunday night broadcast, becoming the most watched event in American TV history*).

Ask the class: Were the ads worth the money in their opinion? Will lots of people go out and buy these products now? Do they think the ads were designed specifically for the audience? Who was the target audience? Were other viewers targeted besides traditional football fans? Did the new commercials persuade them personally to buy a new product or like a brand?

*International Business Times Feb. 11, 2014

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