

Example CMD Activity Plan:

HS Health: Cigarettes & Advertising

See the lesson *The History of Cigarette Commercials: Issues of Persuasion and Regulation*

1) Teaching Context

- **Grade level:** HS
- **Subject area:** Health
- **Unit:** Unhealthy Behaviors (Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco)
- **What might come before or after this activity:** Before – learning about the health impacts of cigarette smoking and vaping.
- **Other relevant contextual information:** It will also be important to discuss stereotypes (especially related to gender) and to know a little about the women’s rights movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

2) Content Objectives:

- Identify the messages about cigarette smoking in TV commercials and PSAs in the 1950s-1970s.
- Learn about when and why TV commercials for cigarettes were banned by Congress.

Literacy/Critical Thinking Objectives: (i.e., CCSS for literacy, media literacy)

- Identify and analyze the persuasive techniques used in TV commercials during different time periods.
- Recognize the ways in which cigarettes were (and are) marketed to different audiences.

3) Document(s) description and link:

This activity is taken from the lesson *The History of Cigarette Commercials: Issues of Persuasion and Regulation*

Who is the target audience for this commercial (or PSA)?

- What are the messages about the effects of smoking cigarettes?
- What are the persuasive techniques use to promote smoking (or to argue against it)?
- How does the historical time period during which this commercial aired show up in the character portrayals and other messages?

4) Decoding Plan:

- Show each of the 3 TV commercials (Camel, Winston, Virginia Slims). After each one, ask:
 - When do you think this commercial was aired? What’s your evidence?
 - What are the messages about smoking? (probe for evidence)
 - Who is the target audience for this product (and commercial)? What makes you say that?
 - Are there stereotypes shown in this commercial? Who might benefit from (or be harmed by) this commercial?
 - Would this commercial work today? Why or why not? Why was it effective at the time it aired?
- Show the PSA, asking the same questions.
- Ask whether we see TV commercials for cigarettes on network television today? Probe about why not, to see if anyone knows the history of the ban against TV commercials for cigarettes in 1970.
- Divide the class into pairs, and hand out copies of the excerpts from the *New Yorker* about the banning of cigarette commercials. Have each pair discuss the way the regulation came about, and the roles of the Surgeon General, Congress, and the FCC Fairness Doctrine.
- Bring the students back together for a whole group discussion. Discuss the ban on cigarette commercials on television and whether they agree with Congress’s decision. Relate to advertising for vaping today.
- (If time) Divide the class into small groups to brainstorm the creation of anti-smoking PSAs for different target audiences (men, women, high school students, children, etc.). Have them include the most effective way to share that PSA (as a TV commercial, Tik-Tok video, print ad, billboard, etc.).