

**MEDIA MATTERS**

**MODULE 5:**

**ADVERTISING &  
PERSUASION**

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**



Coimisiún  
na Meán

# ACTIVITY #1

## WOULD YOU WANT IT?

For each scenario, work through the three steps and answer the questions. Then make your final decision. You are about to read five short descriptions. Each one is about a product, an app or an experience. Your only job right now is to react honestly – don't overthink it.

For each one, tick the box that best describes how you feel. Do not discuss your answers with anyone yet. Later, in groups, share and discuss your responses.

### SCENARIO 1

A famous gaming influencer opens a video by saying, 'I've been using this controller for a week and honestly, my gameplay has never been better. It just feels right.' The creator looks excited and demonstrates a series of impressive moves.

- I'd want to try it
- Sounds interesting
- Not sure
- Not for me

What is being promoted?

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### SCENARIO 2

A post from a popular lifestyle influencer shows a new pair of trainers. The caption reads, 'These are SO comfortable. Wore them all day and my feet felt amazing. Link in bio.' The photo has 14,000 likes.

- I'd want to try them
- Sounds interesting
- Not sure
- Not for me

What is being promoted?

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### SCENARIO 3

You see a short video of a group of friends laughing and having fun at a trampoline park. At the end, text appears on screen: 'Book now – limited slots this weekend!' The video has been shared by the trampoline park's own account.

- I'd want to go
- Sounds interesting
- Not sure
- Not for me

What is being promoted?

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### SCENARIO 4

An influencer you subscribe to shares a story about an energy drink that 'allows you to keep playing sports and not get tired.' They say they have it every morning. In small text in the corner of the screen, it says #ad.

- I'd want to try it
- Sounds interesting
- Not sure
- Not for me

What is being promoted?

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# ACTIVITY #1

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For each one, tick the box that best describes how you feel. Do not discuss your answers with anyone yet. Later, in groups, share and discuss your responses.

### SCENARIO 5

You see a post online that looks like it's from your favourite music artist. The post says, 'Giving away 100 free hoodies – just click the link and enter your personal details before midnight.' The account name is slightly different from the artist's real one, but the photo and logo look the same. Several of your friends have already clicked.

- I'd want to go
- Sounds interesting
- Not sure
- Not for me

What is being promoted?

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### NOW STOP AND THINK

Every scenario you just read was a form of advertising. Some were obvious. Others were not. But each one was designed to make you feel something – and encourage you to act or buy.

Go back and look at your answers. Then answer the questions below in full sentences.

1. How many scenarios did you react positively to? Were you surprised they were all advertising?

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2. Which scenario felt least like an advert? What made it feel that way?

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# ACTIVITY #1

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Every scenario you just read was a form of advertising. Some were obvious. Others were not. But each one was designed to make you feel something – and encourage you to act or buy.

Go back and look at your answers. Then answer the questions below in full sentences.

3. Look at Scenario 4 again. Did you notice the #ad label the first time? Did it change how you felt? Why do you think it was placed in small text?

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4.

What emotions were used to make the products seem appealing? List at least three.

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5. What is the difference between a friend recommending something and an influencer being paid to recommend something? Why does this matter?

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## APPLY STOP • THINK • CHECK

Choose one scenario from Activity 1

STOP – What feeling did it create?

THINK – What was it trying to make you do?

CHECK – What would you do next?

## REMEMBER

Not everyone reacts to the same message in the same way. Someone who enjoys gaming might be very interested in Scenario 1. Someone else might not notice it at all. What we like or care about affects what grabs our attention – and what persuades us. Be aware that scammers also learn what you like online and use it against you. They might pose as your favourite influencer or use language designed to make you stop and pay attention – before trying to sell to you or trick you. That is why it is always important to stop, think and check before believing what you see online.

## ACTIVITY #2

# WANT IT OR NEED IT?

Advertising often makes ‘wants’ feel like ‘needs’.

A **want** is something you would like to have.

A **need** is something you genuinely require.

### THE CHOICES GUIDE

C – Companies often sell wants, not needs

H – Hooked by something exciting or tempting?

O – Only some things are real needs

I – Influencers can make wants feel urgent

C – Created feelings are part of persuasion

E – Everyone feels drawn in sometimes

S – Stopping helps you choose what really matters

### PART 1 – SORT THE ITEMS

Decide whether each item is a want, a need or a it depends. Give a short reason for your choice.

1. A warm winter coat

Want  Need  It depends

Reason:

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2. The latest version of a tablet you already own

Want  Need  It depends

Reason:

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3. A school lunch

Want  Need  It depends

Reason:

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4. A limited-edition hoodie from your favourite creator

Want  Need  It depends

Reason:

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# ACTIVITY #2

## PART 1 – SORT THE ITEMS

5. Drinking water

Want  Need  It depends

Reason:

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6. A new gaming controller when your current one works fine

Want  Need  It depends

Reason:

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7. Trainers that ‘everyone is wearing’

Want  Need  It depends

Reason:

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8. A bicycle for getting to school

Want  Need  It depends

Reason:

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## IT DEPENDS

In summer, you might want it. In winter, you might need it. The coat has not changed – but the timing, the pressure and the reason for buying it have.

This is how advertising works. It tries to make you act now, even when waiting might be the smarter choice.

**Ask yourself:** do I need this right now, or am I being persuaded to feel like I do?

If you are able to think like this, you are well on the way to being media smart!

# ACTIVITY #2

## PART 2 THE PERSUASION TEST

Choose two items you marked as a **want**.

### ITEM A

Item:

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Write one persuasive line an advertiser might use to make it feel important:

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Now look at the CHOICES guide above. Which statements best describe the persuasion technique in your line? Tick one or two:

C  H  O  I  C  E  S

From the letters you ticked, pick the one you think is best and explain why:

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### ITEM B

Item:

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Write one persuasive line an advertiser might use:

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Now look at the CHOICES guide above. Which statements best describe the persuasion technique in your line? Tick one or two:

C  H  O  I  C  E  S

From the letters you ticked, pick the one you think is best and explain why:

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# ACTIVITY #2

## REFLECTION

**Answer in full sentences.**

1. Is it always wrong to buy something you want? Explain your answer.

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2. What question should you always ask yourself before you buy, download or share something?

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## REMEMBER

There is nothing wrong with wanting things. The skill is knowing when that want is your own choice – and when it has been the result of persuasion.

## ACTIVITY #3

# THE INFLUENCER CHALLENGE

You are going to step into the role of an advertiser .

Your challenge is to promote something ordinary – and make your audience feel like they need it, while remembering the existing rules that Coimisiún na Meán and the CCPC enforce (see below).

## YOUR PRODUCT

Your teacher will assign you one of the following:

- A pen
- A bottle of water
- A copy
- A pair of left-handed scissors

**Adverts are easy to recognise as advertising**

**It must be clear what you're buying**

**Advertising does not make you feel worried, left out or not good enough**

**You are not taken advantage of because of your age or experience**

## YOUR TASK

Work in pairs or small groups.

Create a short influencer-style advertisement (30–45 seconds) where you:

- describe the product
- make it sound like something your audience cannot do without
- encourage people to believe it is a need, not just a want

Your post should still sound believable.

You can present it as:

- a video-style script acting as an influencer
- a spoken performance
- A mock TV or radio advertisement

## THINK BEFORE YOU CREATE

How will you persuade your audience?

Some influencers or advertisers use these methods:

- urgency ('You need to get this now before it sells out or by the end of this week...')
- fear of missing out ('Everyone already has one...')
- exaggeration ('This changed everything for me...')
- making it feel essential ('I honestly don't know how I managed without this...')
- strong personal opinion ('I can't go a single day without mine...')

## PERFORMANCE

Share your ad with the class. Be sure to listen carefully to others and check the rules – you will need to analyse them too.

## ACTIVITY #3

# STOP AND THINK

After each performance, answer the questions below.

1. What techniques were used to make the product feel like a need?

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2. Did the post try to create any of these feelings: urgency, fear of missing out, excitement or belonging? Which ones?

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3. Did the product start to seem more important or valuable than it really is? Why?

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4. Would you have been persuaded that you needed it? Explain your answer.

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5. Would any of these advertisements break the rules that Coimisiún na Meán are trying to enforce? Which advertisement could you let Coimisiún na Meán know about?

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## REFLECTION

1. Was it easy or difficult to make an ordinary product feel important?

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2. What does this activity show you about how influencers can turn a want into a need?

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## ACTIVITY #4

# WORD SEARCH TIME

This word search is packed with words linked to the world of media. Can you spot them all?  
There's also a hidden word that doesn't appear in the list.

Clue: *An influencer might use this word when a company has sent them something for free.*

- ADVERTISING
- AUDIENCE
- BELONGING
- BRAND
- CHOICES
- CONTENT
- CONTROL
- CREATOR
- DISCLOSURE
- EMOTION
- ENTERTAINMENT
- INFLUENCER
- LABEL
- NEED
- PERSUASION
- PRODUCT
- PROMOTED
- SPONSORED
- URGENCY
- WANT



### Extra Challenge

If you're done, test your skills by putting all the words into alphabetical order.

# Curriculum Links

## Wellbeing

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*SPHE*  
*Health Education*  
*Media and Digital Wellbeing*  
*Stage 4 – 5th and 6th Class*

*i -*

*DL – Being a digital learner*  
*AL – Being an active learner*  
*AC – Being an active citizen*  
*W – Being well*

### MODULE 4 – STOP • THINK • CHECK

<b>Strand</b>	Wellbeing
<b>Area</b>	Media and Digital Wellbeing
<b>Stage</b>	Stage 4 – 5th and 6th Class
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	Identify strategies to evaluate the credibility of information and consider how media ownership and perspective influence content. <b>W, DL, AC</b>  Critique depictions of topics in the media, recognising examples of stereotypes and bias. <b>W, DL, CL</b>
<b>Key Competencies</b>	DL – Being a digital learner  CL – Being a communicator and using language  AL – Being an active learner  AC – Being an active citizen  W – Being well
<b>Learning Intentions</b>	Understand how to evaluate information critically using a structured method; recognise the warning signs of false information and scams; develop confidence in checking claims before believing or sharing them.
<b>Success Criteria</b>	I can explain the three steps of Stop • Think • Check and when to use them.  I can identify warning signs (red flags) of false information or scams.  I can describe how to verify a claim using reliable sources.
<b>Methodologies</b>	Discussion; guided questioning; comparison of texts; group work; reflection.
<b>Assessment</b>	Written responses; oral explanations; observation; justification using evidence.
<b>Differentiation</b>	<b>Support:</b> structured questions, paired work, sentence starters.  <b>Challenge:</b> evaluate conflicting sources; explain how scams exploit emotions; create own red-flag checklist.
<b>Safety Notes</b>	Reassure pupils that everyone can be fooled; focus on empowerment, not fear; remind pupils to talk to a trusted adult if unsure.
<b>Teacher Reflection</b>	Pupils practised evaluating information using Stop • Think • Check and identified warning signs of false information and scams.

# Answers

