



EduTrend Contents

P4C · FALLACIES AND TRICKY THINKING · MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tricks in Posts and Adverts

Spotting tricky thinking in invented social media posts

Ages 12–14

Level: Intermediate

50 minutes

Circle and small groups
· up to 30

Activity 04

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 04 · AT A GLANCE

Tricks in Posts and Adverts

Students look at invented posts and adverts: “Nine out of ten cool kids use this app”, “If you don’t share this, you don’t care”, “My opponent can’t even dress properly, so why trust his plan?” They identify the trick, rate how persuasive it is and rewrite the message to make an honest case. The enquiry asks whether persuasion is always manipulation.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- identify fallacies in media;
- distinguish emotion and reason;
- rewrite messages honestly;
- evaluate online persuasion.

KEY WORDS

post · advert · manipulation ·
emotion · evidence · share

CURRICULUM LINKS

PSHE: online safety. English: media
texts. Computing: digital literacy.

1**STIMULUS**

Share something to
think about

2**THINK**

Quiet thinking time

3**QUESTION**

Create and choose
a question

4**ENQUIRE**

Reason together

5**BUILD**

Agree, disagree,
add

6**REFLECT**

Last words

Materials (per class)

- Invented post and advert cards
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

SAFETY

Everyone may pass. Discuss ideas, not people,
and use the story or invented examples rather
than personal situations.

ACTIVITY 04 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–8 min Stimulus	Show the invented posts and adverts.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
8–20 min Questions	Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
20–44 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"Is persuasion always manipulation?"</i>
44–50 min Last words	Each person says one last thought or passes.	<i>"Has your thinking changed?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Rewrite one tricky post so it persuades with good reasons only.

ACTIVITY 04 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Messages that trigger strong emotions tend to be shared more, whether or not they are accurate.

Rewriting a manipulative message honestly shows the difference between persuading with reasons and persuading with tricks.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Emotional means wrong.” Emotions can support good reasons.
- “If it has numbers, it’s true.” Numbers can mislead.
- “I would never fall for it.” Everyone can.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use three posts.

Stretch

Design a checklist for spotting tricky posts.

WORKSHEET 1

Our questions

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Write questions the stimulus makes you wonder about.

Our questions

Question	Who asked	Votes

WORKSHEET 2

Post check

Analyse.

Post check

Post	Trick used	Honest version

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

Why do tricky messages spread online? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think... because...

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Asks a philosophical question	Gives reasons and examples	Listens and builds on others

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Tricks in Posts and Adverts is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Fallacies and Tricky Thinking programme (middle school, level: intermediate). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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