



EduTrend Contents

P4C · FREEDOM AND CHOICE · MIDDLE SCHOOL

Did I Really Choose That?

Influence, advertising and free choice

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

Did I Really Choose That?

Students look at invented adverts for a snack and trainers, and a story about a student who buys the same phone as her friends. They list influences on choices: adverts, friends, family, habits and algorithms. They create questions and enquire into whether a choice is still free if it has been influenced.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- identify influences on choices;
- analyse persuasion techniques;
- reason about free choice;
- reflect on their own decisions.

KEY WORDS

influence · advert · persuade · habit
· choice · algorithm

CURRICULUM LINKS

PSHE: media literacy. English: persuasive language. Computing: recommendation systems.

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 advert cards
- Influence chart
- 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	Share the invented adverts and the phone story.	<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>"Did I really choose that?"</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)

Argue whether the phone choice was free.

ACTIVITY 04 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Advertising uses techniques such as repetition, social proof and emotional appeal to shape choices.

Philosophers debate whether being influenced makes a choice less free or is simply part of normal decision-making.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Adverts don’t affect me.” Most people are affected.
- “Any influence makes a choice unfree.” All choices have influences.
- “Only adverts influence us.” Friends and habits do too.

Adapting the activity

Support

Analyse one advert.

Stretch

Design a counter-advert that encourages careful choice.

WORKSHEET 1

Our questions

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Write questions the stimulus makes you wonder about.

Our questions

Question	Who asked	Votes

WORKSHEET 2

Influence tracker

Analyse a choice.

Influence tracker

Influence	How it works	How strong?

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

Is an influenced choice still a free choice? 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

Did I Really Choose That? is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Freedom and Choice 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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