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# Getting the Message!

## Using commercials in the classroom.

Clive Oxenden

2019



# Mr W. (2007)

- 
- Mr W

# How do the makers of this commercial get and keep our attention?

- 
- unusual looking character talking to camera.
  - strange, anti social behaviour.
  - emotive music.
  - engaging our emotions – annoyance or sympathy?
  - mystery.
  - surprise ending.

# Transcript

I think I was always \_\_\_\_\_.

People just didn't seem \_\_\_\_\_ me.

I think I \_\_\_\_\_ them

I got on their \_\_\_\_\_ . I don't \_\_\_\_\_ .

That's just the way \_\_\_\_\_ . Yeah.

Maybe I was \_\_\_\_\_

Maybe I \_\_\_\_\_ on too strong

I don't know. I really \_\_\_\_\_ .

Yeah. It was \_\_\_\_\_ . Really \_\_\_\_\_ .

# Transcript

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But you... you get used to it \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_  
And then \_\_\_\_\_ everything changed  
Someone finally \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.  
Since I got this job life is \_\_\_\_\_.  
I finally feel \_\_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_\_\_ at something.

## How might we use this commercial in class?

- as part of a lesson on TV commercials and advertising techniques.
- a lead in to a lesson on nuclear v renewable energy.
- oral pair work practice in describing (sound off) :

‘A really tall man is walking down the street. He stops behind a woman who is buying some fruit....’

## How might we use this commercial in class?

- prediction. Stop before the end. What's going to happen? What is being advertised?
- discussion – is the adjective effective? Why?
- intensive listening practice – dictation, gap fill, correct the transcript.
- teaching lexis – **messes up her hair, throws sand in the child's face, drops a flower pot from the window.**

## Key points

- play with sound off/on.
- freeze frame BEFORE the end for prediction.
- replay before showing the end (sometimes commercials have subtle elements).
- replay to help with text/dialogue.
- give help with dialogue.
- comprehension questions.



# What to use commercials for?

- 
- When doing the topic of advertising-techniques used commercials and their effectiveness.
  - to prompt discussion on issues related to advertising e.g. stereotyping, sexist attitudes.
  - to set up students making/adapting their own commercials

## What to use commercials for?

- 
- as a lead in to a topic e.g. healthy/unhealthy eating, sport, gender roles, social media.
  - to present/practice a grammar point or vocabulary field.
  - to lead into pronunciation work.
  - for intensive listening practice.

# Why use commercials?

- real, authentic material.
- cool and trendy for young students.
- highly contextualised use of language.
- short, often less than a minute.
- designed to be visual, memorable, powerful, entertaining.
- usually tell a STORY, often without words.

# Why use commercials?

- 
- often have a mystery element and surprise ending.
  - often funny
  - easy to find!
  - free!
  - Very versatile.
  - help to develop critical thinking.
  - give insights into cultural attitudes.

## What to use commercials for?

- as part of the topic of advertising-to compare and discuss effectiveness of commercials and their message.
- to prompt discussion on issues related to commercials e.g. stereotyping, sexist attitudes etc.
- to set up students making/adapting their own commercials

## Watch three commercials

- 
- what's the product ?
  - what's the target audience?
  - what's the slogan?

## Watch these commercials

- 
- How do we find out about the product?
  - what's the message?
  - what's the hook? (the story? the music? the characters? the words?)
  - is the commercial effective?  
why/why not?

# Watch these commercials (1)

- 
- [Autograph](#)



## Watch these commercials (2)

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- smart house

# How do advertisers persuade us?

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They.....

- tell us a story.
- appeal to our emotions.
- play us catchy music.
- use memorable slogans.
- use humour.
- use famous people.

# How do advertisers persuade us?

- 
- make links e.g. between product and good times.
  - make claims.
  - show lots of people using their product.
  - make special offers.

# Talking points about commercials

- Where do you see most commercials these days on TV or online?
- Do you enjoy them or try to avoid them?
- What might make you watch a commercial to the end?
- Are there any products that you are very interested in?
- Can you think of a commercial you have seen which you thought was memorable and effective?

Etc etc

# Famous slogans

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"Have a break, have a \_\_\_\_\_"

Kit Kat

"Eat Fresh"

Red Bull

"Probably the best beer in the world"

Carlsberg

"I'm lovin' it!"

McDonalds

"The world's local bank"

HSBC

"Just do it"

Nike

"Because I'm worth it"

L'Oreal

"It's the real thing"

Coke

## Old slogans were more serious!

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1905 The favorite drink for ladies when thirsty,  
weary, and despondent

1908 Sparkling - harmless as water, and crisp as frost

1916 It's fun to be thirsty when you can get a  
Coca-Cola

1945 Whenever you hear "Have a Coke," you  
hear the voice of America

## What to use commercials for?

- as part of the topic of advertising-to compare and discuss effectiveness of commercials and their message.
- to prompt discussion on issues related to commercials e.g. changing styles and attitudes, gender stereotyping, sexism etc.
- to set up students making/adapting their own commercials

# Advertising has changed!

- 
- Coke 1960s



# Advertising has changed!

- 
- Doctor

# Gender stereotyping?

- 
- Yorkie bar

# Gender stereotyping?

- 
- Busy Christmas

# Gender stereotyping?

- 
- The best a man can be

## What to use commercials for?

- as part of the topic of advertising-to compare and discuss effectiveness of commercials and their message.
- to prompt discussion on issues related to commercials e.g. stereotyping, sexist attitudes etc.
- to stimulate students to make their own commercials

# Students make their own ad

- **make a commercial and present it to the class. Between 1-2 minutes long.**
- **choose the product ( a car, a gadget, a holiday, a service, your school etc).**
- **what's your target market? (age group etc)**
- **how do you make your ad memorable?**
- **does it tell a story? Is there a surprise**
- **are you going to use music?**
- **are you going to use dialogue?**
- **is there a slogan?**

## Students make their own ad

- 
- what kind of language are you going to use?  
formal? informal?

If possible film the commercial.

## What to use commercials for?

- 
- as a lead in to a topic e.g. healthy/unhealthy eating, sport, gender roles, social media.
  - to present/practice a grammar point or vocabulary field.
  - to lead into pronunciation work.
  - for intensive listening practice.



# Use a commercial as a lead in to topic

- 
- Sport

# Use a commercial as a lead in to topic

- 
- Work

## What to use commercials for?

- 
- as a lead in to a topic e.g. healthy/unhealthy eating, sport, gender roles, social media.
  - to present/practice a grammar point or vocabulary field.
  - to show the need for clear pronunciation.
  - for intensive listening practice.

## To present/practice language

Past continuous interrupted by past simple

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- Beast

# To present/practice language

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Present continuous

Show the ASDA Christmas commercial.

Play once and ask students to remember 6 things the mother is doing in the advert.

Play again and freeze frame and students say what the mother is doing

Busy Christmas

# To present/practice language

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Vocabulary related to the house

Watch the John Lewis commercial.

In pairs/small groups remember:

- 1) the rooms the girl dances in.
- 2) 10 pieces of furniture or decorationg TV.

<https://vimeo.com/136912982>

## What to use commercials for?

- 
- as a lead in to a topic e.g. healthy/unhealthy eating, sport, gender roles, social media.
  - to present/practice a grammar point or vocabulary field.
  - to show the need for clear pronunciation.
  - for intensive listening practice.

# Using a commercial to set up pronunciation practice

- 
- <https://www.youtube.com/embed/0MUsVcYhERY?fs=1&autoplay=1>



## Minimal pairs

‘I’m sinking’ ‘I’m thinking’

A

B

sink

think

sing

think

sort

thought

mouse

mouth

pass

path

tense

tenth

## Minimal pairs

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Help! We're sinking!

What are you thinking about?

Let's sing a song.

We're leaving on the tenth.

He's got a big mouse!

I thought so.

## What to use commercials for?

- 
- as a lead in to a topic e.g. healthy/unhealthy eating, sport, gender roles, social media.
  - to present/practice a grammar point or vocabulary field.
  - to show the need for clear pronunciation.
  - for intensive listening practice.

# Using commercials for intensive listening

- 
- Choose a commercial with not too much dialogue or text.
  - Do as dictation or dictagloss

## Showing/choosing commercials

- 
- they can be in English or student's language.
  - sound and image quality.
  - amount of speech/dialogue.
  - relevant to age/interests of students.
  - easy to search by topic or description.
  - youtube subtitle option is very unreliable!

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Why use ads in the foreign language classroom?

Jonathan D. Picken.

Using TV commercials in ESL/EFL classes

Frank Tuzi and Keiko Mori.

<https://community.eflclassroom.com/>

# To present/practice language

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Present continuous

Panda

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Clive Oxenden