



Disability Awareness: Inclusion in Advertising

Est. Time: 20-30 Minutes

Objective

To develop awareness of the inclusion or omission of individuals with disabilities in advertising.

Overview

Though the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in popular culture (e.g., in television shows and movies, as well as on the Internet) is increasing, it is not as yet comparable to their real-life representation in the general population. When one looks at advertising, one finds that the lack of representation is even more pronounced. In this activity, students will examine print and televised ads to determine the extent of inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

Activity

Bring various advertisements (either drawn from the Internet or traditional print sources like newspapers and magazines) to class. Divide students into small groups and instruct them to search the paper for the inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

Ask your students to keep track of the number of TV commercials aired during a set period of time (e.g., during a one-hour program) for a full one-week period. Instruct them to note the number of commercials that included individuals with disabilities.

Questions/Discussion Topics

Ask the students to discuss:

1. The results of their searches and whether they thought those results were representative of the numbers of individuals with disabilities in the general population
2. Their thoughts on the reasons for the inclusion or exclusion of individuals with disabilities
3. Any other thoughts they have on this topic (e.g., is the current representation acceptable?)



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