



## Identifying a Target Audience

Advertisers need to think carefully about their audience before they begin writing copy. Who's going to be reading this? What are their interests, concerns, and questions, and how can we take them into consideration? The celebrities used in the Got milk? ads vary with the targeted audience. In *Sports Illustrated*, it's Mark McGwire with a milk mustache; in *Ladies Home Journal*, it's Melanie Griffith surrounded by her children. Learning how to shape material for a particular audience is an important skill for all writers. For the advertiser trying to sell a product, it is essential.

### THE ACTIVITY

1. Bring in a variety of magazines for children to study. These can be collected from libraries or brought from home. What kind of products are advertised in *Family Circle*, in *Teen People*, in *Time*, in *Sports Illustrated*? In what ways do the advertisers appeal to these different audiences? (Students may notice that the pictures used are different, the language is different, etc.)
2. Advertisers are very precise about their target audiences (i.e., unmarried women between the ages of 22 and 28 or boys between 9 and 12). Cut out some ads



from various magazines. Then have students see if they can figure out who the target audience is by using the Identifying a Target Audience activity sheet (page 27).

3. Ask students to choose a product and try marketing it to two different audiences. For instance, how would they try to sell sneakers to mature athletes and young kids. What pictures and images would they use? What words and slogans?
4. You may want to point out that advertisers personalize advertisements by speaking directly to their target audience, saying “you” frequently in the copy.

Name .....



# Identifying a Target Audience

The target audience is the group or type of people that advertisers want to attract. People may be defined by their age, gender, family status, lifestyle, or interests.

1. How would you, as a member of a target audience, be described?  
(For example, someone might describe himself as an 11-year-old boy living in the country who plays computer games and is interested in the Civil War.)

2. Now study the available advertisements and fill in the following information for each advertisement.

Brand Name

Slogans or Words

Pictures: Describe the image on the advertisement.

Who is the target audience and how do you know this?