Pause Before Buying

Analyze how persuasive media shapes choices and conclusions.

8.C.4.A "Examine how the media can influence beliefs, behaviors, and interpretations by using persuasive techniques (e.g., name calling, innuendo, glittering generalities, card stacking, bandwagon, testimonials, appeal to prestige…"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each phrase or detail that tries to persuade viewers, then label the persuasive technique beside it in the margin.

The GripStep Campaign

1. After several students slipped on wet cafeteria floors, the student council posted videos urging people to wear shoes with good traction. One video called a popular smooth-soled sneaker "a slippery disaster." Another showed only the worst clips of students losing balance, then claimed, "Every careful student chooses GripStep shoes." The posts did not mention that spills were being cleaned more slowly that week. By selecting evidence and using a harsh label, the videos encouraged viewers to blame one type of shoe for every fall.

2. Comments under the videos added other pressures. A local athlete said, "I trust GripStep because my coach wears them," using the athlete's reputation as evidence. A sponsored post pictured a group of friends walking past a shoe store and said, "Join the smart crowd." It suggested that buying the shoes would make someone accepted. These messages may lead viewers to purchase GripSteps, even though the athlete gave no safety data and the crowded image did not prove that the shoes prevent slipping.

3. Media messages can shape interpretations before viewers check the facts. A person who sees the fall clips might conclude that smooth soles are the main danger, while ignoring wet floors and cleanup delays. The phrase "smart crowd" can also make a buyer feel that choosing another brand is foolish. To judge the campaign fairly, viewers could look for information about floor maintenance, compare shoe tread, and ask whether the posts present complete evidence rather than a carefully chosen story.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What two persuasive techniques appear in paragraph 1? Match each technique to a detail from the paragraph.

2. Why is the local athlete's statement not strong safety evidence, even though it may persuade viewers?

3. What behavior might the sponsored post cause, and what technique creates that pressure?

4. How does leaving out the slower cleanup affect a viewer's interpretation of the falls?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Create a made-up two-sentence social media post for a product or cause that uses one persuasive technique. Then write two more sentences that name the technique, predict how it could influence an audience, and state one fact the audience should check.

ANSWER KEY

Pause Before Buying

GRADE 8 · 8.C.4.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each phrase or detail that tries to persuade viewers, then label the persuasive technique beside it in the margin. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two persuasive techniques appear in paragraph 1? Match each technique to a detail from the paragraph.	**Name calling is "a slippery disaster." Card stacking is showing only the worst fall clips while leaving out the slower spill cleanup.**
2	Why is the local athlete's statement not strong safety evidence, even though it may persuade viewers?	**It is a testimonial or appeal to prestige because it relies on the athlete's reputation and gives no safety data.**
3	What behavior might the sponsored post cause, and what technique creates that pressure?	**It may lead viewers to buy GripSteps. It uses bandwagon by urging viewers to join the "smart crowd."**
4	How does leaving out the slower cleanup affect a viewer's interpretation of the falls?	**It can make viewers think the shoes alone caused the falls and ignore wet floors and poor cleanup as causes.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Students across town are choosing ClearSip bottles, so join the refill crowd today. Bring yours to lunch tomorrow. This post uses bandwagon by suggesting that many students already choose the bottle. It may make readers buy it to fit in, but they should check its price, durability, and effect on waste.

Accept accurately labeled techniques supported by quoted or clearly described passage details. In the open task, accept any appropriate persuasive technique if the student explains a likely influence and identifies a relevant fact to check.