

Ads Assume...

Explain to Girl Scouts that advertising experts have the job of selecting pictures or photos to place in ads and on packaging for products they see every day, such as toys, games, and sports equipment. But it's usually a company's top executives who make the final decision about which image will sell their product best. Let the girl scouts know that they will now play the role of those executives! Say something like:

How would you like to be an executive in charge of picking the pictures used to sell products to young people? You'll decide if the pictures are right for the ad or not.

Place the ads and packaging you and the girls have collected in the center of a table. Ask the girl scouts to take turns choosing an item and placing it in one of three piles- "Products for Girls", "Products for Boys", and "Products for Boys and Girls".

Ask the Girl Scouts to say quickly whether they agree with the choices for each pile and if not, explain why. (Let them know they do not need to agree on the choices, but they should listen respectfully to one another's views and feel comfortable speaking up to explain their own views.)

Before the executives decide whether to accept or change the images, pose a few questions like these:

- 1.) How would you describe the images you are seeing?
- 2.) Who is shown using the product in these images? Who is simply looking on?
- 3.) Are you seeing any stereotypes in these images
- 4.) How is it useful for advertisers to use stereotypical images in their ads?
- 5.) When boys and girls are shown together, who is taller? Who looks older?
- 6.) Which images seem to appeal most to girls? Which seem to appeal more to boys?
- 7.) How does the image "make" you want to have the product it's about?
- 8.) Do any girls or boys you know use this product? Do you know whether or not they like it?
- 9.) Why might a boy or girl want or not want to use this product?

Now ask the Girl Scouts to pile up any of the images (or packaging) they think need to be changed because they don't seem to represent a real view of the way girls and boys act in the world. Then invite them to use the art supplies on hand to alter the ads (or packaging) so that they do represent a real view of the world as they know it. They might...

- Paste or draw new images over the existing ones
- Cut up the images and rearrange them in a way that they think makes better sense
- Write what they want the people in the images to be saying by creating their own cartoon balloons and filling them in
- Rewrite the ad or packaging copy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrZ21nD9I-0> – Gender Stereotypes toys

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWu44AqF0il> – Girl Toys vs Boy Toys- a gender experiment