WE HAVE YOU SURROUNDED
EXPLORING BRANDING, MARKETING & GLOBALIZATION

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PURPOSE
We're surrounded by marketing and advertising telling us what to buy, who to be, what we need to be happy. Use this series of activities to help students explore issues of branding, marketing, and globalization.

GRADES
9-12

TIME
Several weeks

MATERIALS
• white board and markers; scratch paper & pens; tape
• images and logos, either on poster board or via PowerPoint or other digital resource; marketing quotes
• large sheets of paper to stick on walls; art supplies
• 2 poster boards (or similar) for each student
• articles from the book "Rethinking Globalization"
• research resources (Internet, online databases, etc.)
• pro- & anti-globalization articles
• excerpts from marketing/sweatshop videos (optional)

SUBJECT AREAS
Health, Language Arts and Social Studies/History

COMMON CORE STANDARDS
Common Core for grades 9-12: http://bit.ly/1gBHncW
PERTINENT INFORMATION

This is a series of activities that can be used to explore issues of branding, marketing and globalization over the course of several weeks. Some of the individual activities could be used on their own.

PREPARATION

1. Find & prepare several logos from national/international products/corporations, as well as some "alternative" logos related to national/international environmental preservation, animal protection, and social justice organizations. Images of these logos could be copied and pasted onto poster boards, or to a PowerPoint or other digital source.

2. Gather quotes about marketing and branding, especially targeted to youth.

3. Gather pro- and anti-economic globalization articles, photos, and other resources; articles from "Rethinking Globalization" or a similar resource; and videos and other resources about marketing, advertising, branding, globalization, sweatshops, and similar topics. (Use our Resource Center as a starting point.)
PROCEDURE

Part 1 -

1. Lead students in a brief discussion on:

   “What most affects your life? What issues, resources, and goods are essential to your survival, health, happiness and well-being?” (Record answers on the white board.)

   “What does society tell you is essential to your survival, health, happiness and well-being?” (Record answers in a second list on the white board.)

2. Show students the images from the corporate and "alternative" logos, and have students try to identify them. Most likely, students will be able to recognize most of the product/corporate logos, and will know very few of the “issues” images.

   Have students discuss questions such as:
   
   - With which images/logos are we most familiar? Why?
   - What do we think about that?
   - What, if anything, should we do about that?

Alternative or Extension:

A. As an alternative (or addition) to the above, you could quiz students on a series of questions related to pop culture (especially characters and celebrities tied to products) and important current events/cultural knowledge to find out which they know more about.

B. You could also give them a series of first names of people/characters from pop culture sources (movies, TV, music) and ask them to identify “Where are they from?” and then do the same with important world leaders they should know (chief justices, heads of state, prize winners, etc.) to see how many of each they can identify.

3. Divide students into small groups of about four. Have each group take themselves step-by-step through a part of their typical day and write down on large sheets of paper all the products/brands they use. For example:

   One group might focus on morning activities, such as:
   
   - Wake up & turn off alarm (brand?)
• Get out of bedding and pajamas (brands?)
• Shower (soap, shampoo, towel brands?)
• Put on clothes (brands?)
• Eat breakfast (brands?)
• Brush/floss teeth (brands?)
• Listen to music or check email, or phone messages? (electronics brands?)

And so on. You could have each group do a different part of the day, or have each group do the same part of the day, in order to compare different brands.

Then, have groups go back through their lists and write down (or talk about) WHY they are using that particular brand. What does it do for them? How does it make their lives better/easier, etc.?

Post this information for all groups to see.

Ask students about their reaction to the prevalence of all this “stuff” in their lives. Ask them to discuss: Is marketing a good thing? A bad thing? Is all this stuff we buy necessary? If not, why do we have it?

4. Use quotes from resources about marketing -- especially to youth -- to inspire additional discussion about marketing, its effects, and its appropriate place in a healthy society.

5. Have students choose one brand or company and one social, animal, or environmental issue, and during a certain period of time (from one day, up to a week or more, depending on the time you choose), mark down the number of times they encounter each of them, whether via print, TV, the web, billboards, conversation, ads, etc. Have students report their findings to the class and discuss their perceptions of what they discovered.

6. Collate the data onto a big wall chart to show the frequency and breadth of visibility for the various brands and issues.

Quote: “Q: Why are we violent but not illiterate? A: Because we are taught to read.” ~ Student of peace teacher and journalist, Colman McCarthy

7. Using the quote above from Colman McCarthy’s book "I’d Rather Teach Peace" as a jumping off point, lead a discussion about what the impact is of being surrounded by one type of information or message, while another type of information or message is sparingly present. What are these
messages teaching us? Is that good? Bad? Neutral?

8. Divide students into teams of about four. Have each team choose a social, animal, or environmental issue or concept and create a representative logo that will be identifiable and understandable worldwide. Have them develop one idea for marketing that brand/logo to the public. Have them share their new logos and marketing plans with the class.

**Part 2 -**

1. Have students conduct a survey of their own rooms at home and make a list of 15-30 of the brands present, noting in which countries the items were manufactured. Have students share the brands and countries of origin, and compile those onto a giant wall chart.

2. Have each student choose a brand from his/her list, and then a product from the chosen brand. Have students find at least one print and one web ad for that product and bring the ads to class (Students can bring a screenshot of the web ad). Ask students to determine and discuss issues such as:

   - What experience or lifestyle is the company selling through its product?
   - How does the ad make you feel?
   - How does the product make you feel?
   - What does the product do for you? (How is it supposed to make your life better?)
   - What relevant information is missing from the ad (including information about any harm caused to people, animals or the earth from the product/service)?

3. Give each student a piece of recycled poster board or large sheet of paper. Have students paste their print and web ads on the paper/poster board and write a list of descriptors (in response to the questions above) below/above/around the ads. Post these around the classroom.

4. Have students research their chosen product to answer questions such as:

   - Where is this product made?
   - Using what materials?
   - Using what processes?
   - Creating what waste products?
WE HAVE YOU SURROUNDED

1. Divide students into small groups of about four. Have each group choose any one of the brands (products) mentioned in any of the previous exercises and research the business practices of the corporation that created that brand (product). Groups should look for evidence of corporate violations of human rights, labor, environment, animal abuse, discrimination, and other social and environmental practices, as well as for positive information on the corporation’s business practices. Sample resources might include:

   - Green America’s Responsible Shopper:
   - Corp Watch:
     [http://corpwatch.org/](http://corpwatch.org/)
   - Corporate Accountability International:

   Students may wish to use other sources to find out about potential

Note: If time is a factor, you may want to have students do #2-#5 in small groups. You may also wish to have students complete these activities digitally, creating infographics, etc., instead of the posters. The advantage of print is that they can be posted around the room for comparison and reflection.

Part 3 -

5. On poster board, have students create a “cradle to grave” illustrated life history of their product that shares all the information they discovered about the product and its creation, noting important positive and negative elements. You can have students post this poster board below their poster board with the sample ads, so that the two can be compared.

Note: It may be helpful to have students read “Just a Cup of Coffee?” (p. 243) and “Tomasito’s Tour (p. 240) from the book "Rethinking Globalization" ahead of time to give them a guideline for completing this activity.
corporate violations or unethical practices, and may use resources such as the corporation’s annual report, website, and news reports to identify positive practices.

2. Have groups develop a list of the positives and negatives they discovered about their corporation and share those with the class.

3. Have the class develop a list that defines what good corporate citizenship entails, and then have them rate the researched corporations accordingly. Which are good corporate citizens? Which are not? Why?

Note: For #3, you may wish to share/discuss information ahead of time about what exactly a corporation is, the rights and obligations of corporations, why some corporations include socially responsible practices and others don’t (and examples of what those practices are), others’ ideas about what constitutes good corporate citizenship, etc.

For others’ ideas, you may wish to introduce students to resources such as:

- B Corporation
  http://bcorporation.net/
- Robert Hinkley's "Code of Corporate Citizenship":
  http://bit.ly/1g3nrCl

4. Have the same small groups each choose a country affected by their chosen corporation (it could be the country of origin, a country in which the corporation does business or exports products, etc.) and conduct a literature search on that country and its relationship with economic globalization. Have each group search for Internet sources and online databases (available through most public/school libraries) for articles and information related to their chosen country and economic globalization. Have each group collate and summarize the information they found, looking for themes such as:

- What social, environmental and animal welfare issues were mentioned?
- What information about the influence of your chosen corporation within this country was mentioned?
- What points of view were represented? What points of view were missing or underrepresented?
- What stakeholders advocated for economic globalization? What stakeholders advocated against economic globalization?
• What positive and/or negative impacts of economic globalization were cited?
• What were the sources of information for the articles – what bias might they have?

Have each group share their findings with the class.

**Part 4 -**

1. Share a variety of pro- and anti-economic globalization articles with students, as well as sample photos and other items, and have the class discuss the different views represented (as well as their own) regarding economic globalization.

2. Divide students into small teams. Have them find an example from the media of a situation involving a multinational corporation’s contested activities in another country. (Examples: a corporation that tried to open up a “sweatshop” in another country; a corporation that tried to secure logging rights in another country’s forests, etc.)

   Based on the selected example, have the team delineate members to play the roles of the different stakeholders involved. For example: a representative of the corporation, a member of the governing body, a citizen, a consumer, an indigenous member, one or more animals affected, etc.

   **Alternative:** You could already have several examples available for teams to choose from.

3. Have each team role-play the scenario, advocating for their person’s/being’s views, and try to come to some resolution that works for everyone. Additionally, have the groups outline the positive and negative impacts (for people, the animals, the environment, etc.) of their proposed resolution.

4. Have each team share their experiences with the class, and then compare their resolution – if any – to what actually happened in the real situation.

   **Alternative:** You could use the Huaorani Indians role play from "Rethinking Globalization" (p. 268) and then discuss.
Part 5 -

1. Encourage students to write a reflective essay about everything they’ve learned and explored regarding branding, marketing, and globalization so far. Invite volunteers to share some of what they wrote.

2. Lead students in a discussion to address the question: “Now what?”, responding to questions such as:
   - Based on what they’ve learned what, if any changes will students make in their lives?
   - How can we as citizens promote and support products and services that are humane for all concerned (people, animals, environment)?
   - What should be done – if anything – about economic globalization and multinational advertising?
   - How do we ensure we’re not being branded?
   - How do we help those who are experiencing the negative effects of economic globalization and marketing?

3. Have students develop a list of potential actions to take, based on their initial conclusions.

4. Set a date for the class to check back about actions they’ve taken, and what successes and obstacles they’ve encountered.

EXTENSIONS

1. Offer additional activities on globalization and marketing, such as those available in "Rethinking Globalization."

2. Show students clips from documentaries such as "The Merchants of Cool," "Sweating for a T-Shirt," etc.

3. Have students explore how they are branded and labeled. (Geek? Jock? Slacker? Goth?) What brands do you buy? Who usually buys those brands? To whom are those brands marketed?

4. Have students create their own brand/logo, which reflects what’s special and important to them about themselves.