Fun Classroom Projects – Advertising Mail

Project A

Step 1: Collect Advertising Mail
For an entire week, ask students to collect advertising mail they receive at home. This should include all catalogs, coupons, flyers, and similar pieces of advertising mail. IMPORTANT! Please do not have students bring in any pre-approved credit card offers or any mail that contains personal/financial information. At the end of the week, ask all students to bring the mail to class.

Step 2: Analyzing Advertising Mail
Once the mail has been collected and brought into class, split the students into teams to analyze the mail. The teams should have 15-20 minutes to discuss the following questions:

1. What types of products did the catalogs sell?
2. What items in the catalogs did you like? What didn’t you like?
3. What were your five favorite items in the catalogs? How much did they cost?
4. Which catalogs offered special savings?
5. If you were making a catalog, what type of products would you sell?
6. How many coupons did you receive?
7. About how much money does each coupon save?
8. If you added up all of the coupons, how much money could you save?
9. Which coupons do you think are the best deals? Why?
10. What was the best catalog and coupon you received? Why?

Step 3: Classifying Advertising Mail
In a large space, place 3-5 hula hoops on the floor to represent a Venn Diagram. Each hula hoop should represent a different category of mail. Possible categories include: coupons, flyers, catalogs, effective messages, ineffective messages, items you want, items you do not want, photographs, no photographs, good deals, for adults, for teens, for kids, for men, for women, for a charity, for a local business, for a national company, etc. Categories should be chosen to allow each piece of advertising mail to potentially be in more than one category.

All advertising mail should be placed in one pile. Students should display the mail for everyone to see and as a class, select which category or categories the advertising mail belongs. This process should result in discussion and compromises within the group. Mail will then be placed into the appropriate hula hoop on the floor, or alternatively, taped within the circles on the board.

After placing all mail into the Venn Diagram, discuss the results with the class. As a class, ask the students the following questions:

1. What makes an effective advertisement?
2. Why did some ads catch your attention more than others?
3. How did you know what was advertised in the mailings?
4. How would you improve the messages and design?
5. How is this an effective way to deliver information?
6. Did you have any advertisements or mailings from charities?
7. How did they differ from product advertisements?

Once this activity is complete, emphasize the environmental benefits of recycling. Afterwards, recycle the collected mail.
Project B

**MailMatters Resource Kit Handouts**

Distribute the MailMatters handouts to the students and assign them to read the materials to better understand the positive role of advertising mail in the economy and environment. Also, assign the Crossword Puzzle and Word Search worksheets. Students should be able to answer the clues based on their reading of the MailMatters handouts. The answer key is included below for your convenience.

Project C

**Creating Your Own Advertising Mail**

Ask students to pretend their class is a small town in America, and they have the job of writing advertisements for an assigned business or organization. Assign each student to an individual business or organization in the town, including a grocery store, post office, drug store, restaurant, community/recreation center, car dealership, clothing store, electronics store, toy store, and charity. Students may work in teams.

Each student or team will be assigned to create a direct mail advertisement in support of the business or organization they represent. Students will need to creatively determine the name for their organization, what they are advertising and messages that communicate their distinct features or benefits.

Using construction paper, crayons, markers, or colored pencils, students will create a brochure, flyer or postcard advertising their organization to other residents in the town. Advertisements will use design concepts similar to the mailed items students brought into class. When making the messages and designs, students should consider the characteristics of effective advertising already discussed in class. Once they are completed, the students will present their advertisements in front of the class and explain why they chose their designs and messages.

Once the presentations are complete, ask the students the following questions for group discussion:

1. What was the most difficult part of making an advertisement? Why?
2. Why do you think the advertisement you made was effective?
3. Were there things you could have done to make a better advertisement?
4. Why do companies and organizations use advertising mail?
5. What benefits can advertising mail bring a company or organization?

**Answers to Crossword Puzzle and Word Search**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACROSS</th>
<th>DOWN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Of all the states, California buys the most items by catalog.</td>
<td>1. Paper is made from trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. DMA is the acronym of the Direct Marketing Association.</td>
<td>2. For over 30 years, Sears sold homes through the mail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The first American mail-order catalog was created by Benjamin Franklin.</td>
<td>3. Direct mail offers easy comparison shopping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. After finishing a catalog, you should recycle it.</td>
<td>4. Paper is a renewable resource.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Shopping by catalog reduces car emissions.</td>
<td>5. Catalogs allow Americans to shop at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. About 10.6 million American jobs depend on direct mail.</td>
<td>7. Catalogs offer lower prices on items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. About 10.6 million American jobs depend on direct mail.</td>
<td>8. The amount of U.S. forestland is about the same as it was in the early 1900's.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further smart shopping information, please visit http://www.dmachoice.org/MailTelephoneShopping/.
Fun Classroom Projects – Advertising Mail

Crossword Puzzle

Across
3. Of all the _____, California buys the most items by catalog.
6. _____ is the acronym of the Direct Marketing Association.
9. The first American mail-order catalog was created by Benjamin _____.
10. After finishing a catalog, you should _____ it.
12. Shopping by catalog reduces car _____.
15. About 10.6 million American _____ depend on direct mail.
16. www.DMAChoice.com is found on the _____.

Down
1. Paper is made from _____.
2. For over 30 years, Sears sold homes through the _____.
3. Direct mail offers easy comparison _____.
4. Paper is a _____ resource.
5. _____ allow Americans to shop at home.
7. Catalogs often offer lower _____ on items.
8. The amount of U.S. _____ is about the same as it was in the early 1900’s.
11. Philadelphia pharmacist Asa Cantler invented the _____.
13. Shopping by catalog saves time and _____.
14. _____ is a synonym for environmental.
Word Search

Word Bank
Catalog  Green  Consumer  Shop
Coupon  Marketing  Association  Postal
Mail  Advertising  Environment  Paper
Recycle  Direct  Renewable  Resource

Q M A I L K Q N H B R E Z C C H
B M E H R W M U E Z C V Q O U J
E F J Q L M T X U E K D B N N P
N V L C W S F M C D R T M S H O
V W A K R T N R T Y X G G U V H
I N T S C G U Y C U H Y M M S S
R L S D J O K J Q E O A W E L U
O E O R S U U H X M N D Q R F N
N Y P E B I G P N J F V D F D O
M S R Z E F I B O R P E R U C I
E I E I M C O D Y N C R J W F T
N G M Y S I B Y H Y O T S C U A
T Z A S K Z X J A R F I H A D I
C W R E C Y C L E Y Q S B T S C
L X K N C I D V W B M I G A V O
G R E N E W A B L E K N R L J S
S G T K W X F T C A P G T O T S
Z D I R E C T H D V O A R G B A
B F N K L V O B E A S K L F Y B
C Y G T E O P R E P A P N C D M