

# Best Practices of Technology Integration

**Title:** Kids are Consumers Too

**Submitted by:**

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**Subject Area:** Social Studies, English, Math

**Intended Grade Level(s):** 4-8

**Description:**

Sometimes you feel like a nut...sometimes you don't...You deserve a break today...Reach out and touch someone...or Just Do It!

With a partner, students will choose a type of product to investigate.

An example of a type of product would be tennis shoes. Using television, radio, print, and Internet sources, students will investigate how the product is advertised. Next, students will create a market research survey to determine which brand is preferred by their peers and why. Students will use graphs to illustrate the gathered data. After analyzing the results of the data, students will create an advertisement for the winning product in the form of a poster and a tri-fold brochure. Since students have discovered what the preferred brand is for a particular product, they will need to persuade their parents to buy this product for them by writing a letter to them.

As a conclusion to the project, the partners will create a commercial for the preferred brand that will be performed for the class and video taped.

**Narrative:**

Kids are Consumers Too! Children have more and more money to spend. It is important for children to become critical consumers. In order for this to happen they need to be aware of how products are created, advertised and consumed. This multidisciplinary unit brings economic perspective alive while making natural connections between the real world and the curricular areas of social studies, math, and English.

Bringing the real world into the classroom through this authentic unit engages children which creates a desire to learn. Students are eager to gather information from other students, family, and friends. Students are also excited to use technologies such as the computer, Internet, e-mail, scanner, and digital camera.

This unit promotes higher-order thinking because the students are asked to gather and manipulate data different from the other students around them. In order to present their findings of the preferred brand to the class in a multitude of ways, the students will need to arrive at conclusions from the data they have gathered.

### **Curriculum Benchmarks: 3 for each curricular area addressed**

**MI.SOC.V.2.LE.2** Gather and Analyze information using appropriate information technologies to answer the question posed.

**MI.MAT.III.1.E.2** Organize data using concrete objects, pictures, tallies, tables, charts, diagrams and graphs.

**MI.ELA.3.LE.3** Read and write fluently, speak confidently, listen and interact appropriately, view knowledgeably, and represent creatively. Examples include exploring ideas in a group, interviewing family and friends, and explaining ideas represented in pictures.

### **Total amount of time for lesson:**

This lesson can be completed by spending one hour a day for 30 days on the activities along with a little bit of time spent for homework (most of the project should be done at school but the students might need to record commercials at home.) Lessons to introduce concepts in addition to what the students are working on will take more time during a school day.

### **Materials/Hardware/Software:**

Internet, TV, radio, books, magazines, word-processor, video camera, VCR, digital camera, scanner, multimedia tools, and e-mail.

### **Preparation Teacher:**

There isn't much preparation needed before starting this unit except revising the rubrics to meet your needs and xeroxing them. It is important to become completely familiar with the entire project before starting so that you can give the big picture to the students before they begin the smaller, individual tasks. This will help the students focus if they know the overall goals.

### **Prerequisite Student Skills:**

This unit touches upon many skills that children need. Before beginning each task, review the skills needed and decide if additional instruction is needed in particular areas. Many times this

can be done as short lessons while working on the task.

Students should be familiar with: using multiple reference sources; organizing and classifying information; demonstrating effective communication and listening skills; using the writing process; complying with copyright restrictions; summarizing, organizing, analyzing, and synthesizing information; constructing, reading, interpreting, and comparing tables; and, constructing, reading, and interpreting bar graphs.

### **Student Activities/Procedures:**

First:

In pairs, students choose a product such as tennis shoes or peanut butter.

Second: Product Advertisement

How is the product advertised? It is the student's job as an independent investigator to figure out how the product of their choice is marketed. If the product is tennis shoes, then students will explore the different brands of tennis shoes. What do the advertisements have in common? How do the advertisements differ?

Student pairs are responsible for creating a presentation to share with classmates that shows the different ways the product is marketed. This might include video taping commercials, creating a HyperStudio card linking to different web sites, and sharing radio segments. Choose 3 brands that seem to be widely advertised to make a Venn diagram showing similarities and differences. Be sure to fairly represent the different brands. Bias is not welcome at this point of the project. Presentation method is the choice of the students. This should be a short part of the project and the presentations need not be extremely elaborate.

Third: Market Research and Analysis

With their partners, the students will create a market research survey to determine which brand is preferred by the students' peers and why. Graphs will be used to illustrate the gathered data. To begin, the students must create a survey to give to their classmates which asks for their brand preference for the particular product. It is very important to find out WHY the specific brand is chosen. Each pair of students will graph the class data and write a paragraph that discusses the data and the reasons behind it.

Next, the students need to survey the general public (other students.) This may be done by a questionnaire on the playground, written surveys, e-mail to and from other schools, and any other way agreed upon with the teacher.

With their partners, the students need to decide upon a way to present the data in an interesting and easy to understand written form. Graphs are required.

Fourth: Product Information

Student research and report on each of the following questions.

1. Describe the typical consumer of your preferred brand.
2. Analyze your product's production to describe the service providers, human capital, capital equipment, and natural resources.
3. Describe the types of resources necessary to produce and distribute your product.
4. Is your product imported? Is your product exported? To and from where?
5. Create a hypothetical (fictional) situation that involves opportunity cost and a consumer.
6. Find out if your product is produced by a business that is under individual ownership,

partnership, or corporation.

#### Fifth: Poster Advertisement

The students have just been hired by the preferred brand company to create a **new** magazine advertisement. This must be presented to the board of directors in the form of a poster. The students share the new advertisement with the “board of directors” (the class). The board of directors will have questions pertaining to the planned audience for the ad and the reasons behind that decision. To add graphics to the poster, the digital camera is an option. All text on the poster must be computer generated.

#### Sixth: Tri-fold Brochure

As the advertising team for this product, the students need to create a tri-fold brochure to be distributed to consumers. The goal is to make people want to buy the product based on the brochure. The brochure needs to include a picture of the product, slogan, history behind the product, reasons for buying the product--features (good gripping, long lasting sole) and benefits (what is the benefit of a particular feature), testimonials from consumers, and availability (where can this product be found). The product brochures will be xeroxed and then distributed to consumers after your commercial presentation.

#### Seventh: Persuasive Letter

Now that the students have discovered which brand is preferred by consumers and why, the students need to persuade their parents to buy this item for them by writing a letter. When writing a persuasive letter, it is important to clearly state a position or desire. The position must also be supported with knowledge from history, geography, civics, or economics. Be sure to include support for the position with information from the gathered data. Finally, the position should be supported with reference to at least one core democratic value. When the letters are finished, share them with the class.

#### Eighth: Commercial

As a conclusion to the consumer project, the student partners will create a commercial for the preferred brand of each chosen product. This will be performed for the class and video taped. The commercial must use what was learned about why the brand is preferred by people. For instance, if Reebok shoes were the tennis shoes of choice and many people stated comfort during running as a reason, this should be part of the commercial. Most commercials on TV are either 30 or 60 seconds long. Your commercial must fall into this time range. A copy of the script must be provided to the teacher. After performing the commercial, students must be prepared to answer questions from the classmates about the particular product and the market research that was gathered.

In addition, while this unit is occurring, the students could do a comparative study of the amount of consumer goods they own with the goods owned by people in other countries. The students devise a survey to find out about the products and quantities owned by their families (i.e. bicycles, cars, microwaves, telephones, televisions, etc.) along with the amount of time spent using them. Then, using e-mail, students administer the same survey to many people in foreign locations. Finally, the students graph and write about the similarities and differences. (Rubrics not provided for this activity.)

**Assessment/Evaluation:**

Students will be assessed for their ability to define a problem and create a questionnaire which will provide data to answer the problem; the mathematical accuracy of their results; the creativity and persuasiveness of their brochure and the overall quality of their market research.

Rubrics for each activity of this unit are provided as an attachment.

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