Things for Sale

Essential Question
How do some websites try to get you to buy things?

Lesson Overview

Students examine websites that are designed around a particular product to understand that the purpose of the site is to encourage them to buy the product. Students learn to recognize the varied methods used to promote and sell products on these sites.

Students explore several product sites aimed at kids, identifying elements designed to draw their attention and make them want to buy the product. They grasp how the games, videos, activities, and other appealing features of the site serve the ultimate purpose of selling the product. Students then use what they have learned to draw a home page for a product site of their own invention.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to ...

- understand that the main purpose of product sites is to encourage viewers to buy the product.
- recognize how a site's fun and interesting features help sell the product.
- create their own product site home pages with features designed to sell their products.

Materials and Preparation

- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Copy the **My Product Website Student Handout**, one for every student. (Or provide students with blank paper.)
- Preview the websites www.crayola.com and www.webkinz.com, and be prepared to guide students through the steps in the lesson. (Keep in mind that the sites listed include advertising. We chose these sites to illustrate the point that sites for kids often include advertising, and to help students recognize advertising content. We do not endorse or promote the products sold on these sites.)

Family Resources

- Send home the **Evaluating Websites Family Tip Sheet (Elementary School)**.

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Standards Alignment –

Common Core:

grade K: RL.1, RL.4, RL.10, RI.1, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4, W.5, W.7, W.8, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.2, SL.3, SL.6, L.6

grade 1: RL.1, RL.4, RI.1, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4a, W.5, W.7, W.8, L.6

grade 2: RL.1, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4a, W.7, W.8, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.3, SL.6, L.6

NETS·S: 1b, 1c, 3a-d, 4c, 5a

Key Vocabulary –

purpose: the reason something exists; what it is meant to do

product: something that is made and sold to people

advertise: to draw attention to something that is for sale, and try to get people to buy it

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introduction

Warm-up *(5 minutes)*

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **purpose**. Then ask students to think about toy stores they have visited.

ASK:

What is the purpose of the store?	Students should recognize that the main purpose of the store is to sell toys.

INVITE students to imagine the following scenario: *You're visiting a store that sells your favorite toys. There's a play area where you can try out the toys. There are games you can play using the toys. There's a screen showing a video about the toys.*

ASK:

What is the purpose of having these fun things to do at the store?	Students should understand that the purpose of the games, videos, and other fun things is to make kids want to buy the toys.

DISCUSS the idea that the toys are the real "star" of the store. All of the other things going on at the store — the play area, the games one can play with the toy, and the screen showing a video about the toy — are designed to make kids pay attention to the toys and want the toys.

EXPLAIN to students that some websites have things for sale, including toys and other things for kids. These sites also have fun things to see and do, which make people pay attention to the toys. However, the sites' real purpose is to sell the toys.

teach 1

Tricks of the Trade *(10 minutes)*

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **product**. Explain to students that they will be visiting a site that sells products.

INTRODUCE students to the the Crayola website (www.crayola.com).

HAVE students work in groups to view the site on shared computers, or project the site onto a screen for students to view together. (Most students will be familiar with Crayola as a maker of crayons. They should be aware that Crayola products also include markers, colored pencils, paint, chalk, and craft materials.)

EXPLORE the Crayola site as a class, guiding students through the following steps.

Step 1: Click on the Products link.

ASK:

What is this page trying to get you to do?	Students should understand that this page is clearly designed to sell Crayola products.

Step 2: Click on the Coloring Pages link.

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ASK:

What can you do here? How do you think this might help sell the products on the site?	Students should recognize that pages they can color and activities using the product encourage them to want to buy the kinds of products that Crayola sells, such as crayons, markers, and colored pencils.

Step 3: Click on the Craft Ideas page and repeat the questions in Step 2. (Students should recognize that in order to make these crafts, they would need to buy the kinds of products Crayola sells.)

Step 4: Click on the Games and Fun link, and then click on activities such as Card Maker. Repeat the same questions again. (Students should recognize that these activities also use Crayola products.)

Step 5: Click on one or two of the games on the Games and Fun page. Point out that all the games involve lots of bright colors.

ASK:

How do you think these games might help sell the products on this site?	Guide students to understand that because Crayola products all involve colors and coloring, the games might help create good feelings about these products, making them seem fun and exciting.

REVISIT with students all the different tricks the website uses to encourage them to think about and want to buy Crayola products.

ASK:

How are Crayola products the real "star" of this website?	Students should understand that all the activities on the site feature Crayola products in one way or another.
What is the purpose of this website?	Students should understand that the purpose of the site is to sell more Crayola products.

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **advertise**.

POINT OUT to students that they have seen products advertised on commercials on TV or in magazines. Explain that they will now focus on how products are advertised on websites, which can be trickier to figure out.

GUIDE students to explain how the different features on the Crayola site advertise Crayola products. For example, fun activities that use crayons and markers draw attention to the products that Crayola sells. They might make people want to buy those products in order to do the activities.

teach 2

More Tricks of the Trade *(10 minutes)*

INTRODUCE students to the website Webkinz World (www.webkinz.com). Students may already be familiar with Webkinz, but be sure they all understand that Webkinz are stuffed animals. When people buy a stuffed animal and register it at the site, they receive a Pet Code. Using the Pet Code, they get an animal character and can enter the world on the website called Webkinz World.

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EXPLORE the Webkinz site as a class, guiding students through the following steps.

Step 1: Click on the Products link.

ASK:

What do you need to do here? How does this help sell Webkinz products?	Students should understand that they need to buy a Webkinz stuffed animal in order to enter Webkinz World.

Step 2: Return to the home page and click on the link at the bottom called Webkinz Catalog.

ASK:

What is going on here? How does this encourage you to buy Webkinz products?	Students should understand that this page is clearly designed to sell Webkinz products.

Step 3: Return to the home page and click on the link at the bottom called Take a Tour.

ASK:

What is going on here? How does this encourage you to buy Webkinz products?	Students should recognize that the link shows them all of the fun things they can do in Webkinz World. It encourages them to buy a stuffed animal so that they can get a code and enter the world.

Step 4: Return to the home page and click on Webkinz News, which you can access without a code. Play one of the videos and click on some of the links to games, contests, and recipes.

ASK:

What different things can you do here? Do these things make people want to buy Webkinz products?	Students should understand that all the things feature cute Webkinz animals and are designed to make viewers want the animals.

REVISIT with students all the different tricks the website used to encourage them to think about and want to buy Webkinz products.

ASK:

How are Webkinz products the real "star" of this website?	Students should understand that all the activities on the site feature Webkinz products.

What is the purpose of this website?	Students should understand that the main purpose of the site is to sell more Webkinz products.

How does this site advertise Webkinz products?	Students should explore the idea that all the features on the site draw attention to the Webkinz products and encourage people to buy them.

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My Product Website *(15 minutes)*

DISTRIBUTE copies of the **My Product Website Student Handout**, one for each student.

ARRANGE students in groups to share crayons, markers, or colored pencils.

EXPLAIN to students that they will be designing their own product webpage for a toy. The purpose of the webpage will be to draw attention to a particular toy and encourage people to buy it.

REMIND students that product websites use different "tricks" to encourage them to want to buy toys. Different "tricks" include videos, games, contests, or a virtual world that features the product.

ENCOURAGE students to think of a toy they have seen, or one they would like to invent. Ask them to design their webpage, including the following elements:

1. One or more pictures of the toy (drawn or printed out)

2. A place where people can click to buy the toy

3. At least one "trick" to encourage people to buy the toy

INVITE students to take turns sharing their product webpages with the class. Have them describe their product, and then point to at least two things on their page that draw attention to the product and encourage people to buy it.

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closing

Wrap-up *(5 minutes)*

You can use these questions to assess your students' understanding of the lesson objectives.

ASK:

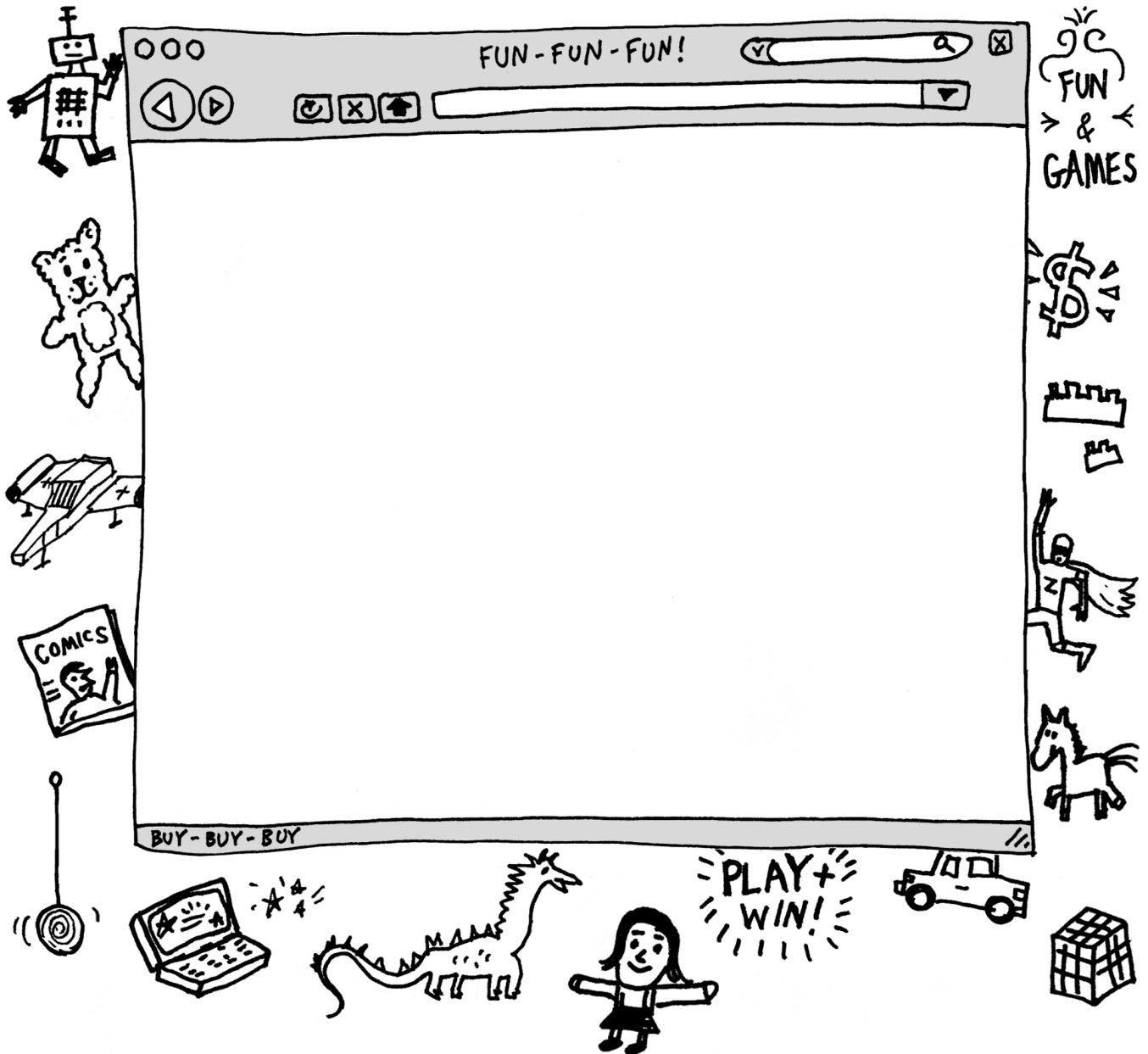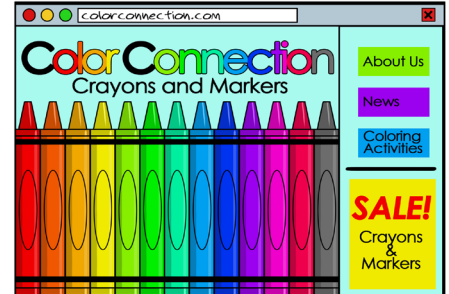|	
What is a product?	Something that is made and sold to people.
What is the purpose of a product site, like the ones we looked at today?	The main purpose of a product site is to sell a company's products.
What was one of the ways you advertised your product on the website you designed?	Students' answers will vary. Highlight any students whose strategies included using online games and activities, which are common ways to encourage kids to have fun with their product online so that they'll want to buy it in real life.

Things for Sale

Directions

Draw a webpage that will get kids to buy a toy.

FUN - FUN - FUN!

FUN & GAMES

BUY - BUY - BUY

COMICS

PLAY + WIN!

Things for Sale

1. **This site sells crayons and markers. Why do you think there are lots of fun coloring activities on this site?**

   a) To make you want the crayons and markers that are for sale

   b) To make you want to buy beads

   c) To give you homework help

2. **Circle the game that is NOT an ad.**

   a)

   b)

   c)

3. **This is a free game. They are trying to sell you something. What are they trying to sell you?**
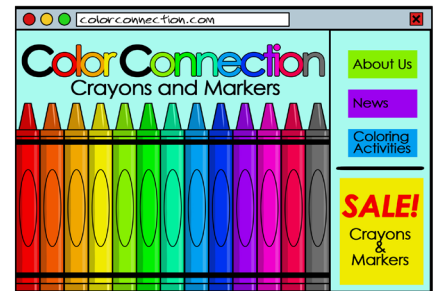
   a) comics

   b) the game

   c) a cat

Things for Sale

1. This site sells crayons and markers. Why do you think there are lots of fun coloring activities on this site?

   a) To make you want the crayons and markers that are for sale

   b) To make you want to buy beads

   c) To give you homework help

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **a**. The main purpose of the site is to sell the crayons and markers. The activities make you think about coloring and make you want to buy the crayons and markers so you can color both online and offline.

2. Circle the game that is NOT an ad.

a)   b)   c)

Answer feedback

You should have circled game **c**. You can tell that **a** and **b** are ads because they say *advertisement* in small letters.

3. This is a free game. They are trying to sell you something. What are they trying to sell you?

   a) comics

   b) the game

   c) a cat

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **a**. The site is trying to sell comics. It has fun things to do so you will want to buy the comics.