

Worksheet B - Reading Aesthetics

Media are constructed by any combinations of sound, moving images and visuals intended to generate an emotional reaction. From a purely aesthetic view, TV ads are a kind of sequential art. When analyzing media, the following are aesthetic considerations:

What is your intuitive response? Do a free write (automatic writing exercise) to generate an unedited response to the media sample. This means continuously writing without moving your pen or pencil for either a set amount of time or pages. The only rule in automatic writing is to never stop the hand from moving and to not edit, delete or backtrack anything written down. Spur students by asking: Do any particular words come to mind when you look at this sample? You can also experiment by running the sample with no sound, or alternately without image and only sound.

Consider the following:

Picture:

- How would you describe it to a person who cannot see?
- What are the shapes?
- What are the colors like? Do they have a mood?
- How is it spatially? Is it crowded or airy?
- What's the contrast between lights and darks?
- If it's a moving image sample (TV, film, animation), what is the style of editing? Is it fast or slow? A mix? How is the pacing?

Sound:

- How would you describe it to a person who cannot hear?
- What do you hear?
- Is it loud or quiet?
- Is there music? What kind? Is it something you know (pop), or is it ambient (background)? What is the style of music, who would it appeal to?

Intention:

- What was the media producer intending? How successful is the attempt?