# Things for Sale

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

## Learning Overview and Objectives

*Overview:* Students examine websites designed around a particular product and 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.

**objectives**

*Students will:*

• Understand 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

**Estimated time:** 45 minutes

*Materials*

• **My Product Website Student Handout** (Handout is optional. Plain paper can be used. See Teach 3.)

• Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

*Preparation*

• Copy the **My Product Website Student Handout**, one for every student (optional)

• Preview the websites listed in Teach 1, and Teach 2 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.)

*Parent Resources*

• Send parents the **Research and Evaluation for Elementary Students Parent Tip Sheet**

## Key Vocabulary

• **Purpose:** The reason why 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

teaching plans

## Introduce

**DEFINE** the Key Vocabulary word **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 you can play with the toy, and the screen showing a video about the toy — are designed to make you 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. But their real purpose is to sell the toys.

## Teach 1: Tricks of the Trade

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

**INTRODUCE** students to the following site. Have students work in groups to view the site on shared computers, or project the site onto a screen for students to view together.

**Crayola:** www.crayola.com

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.

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.)

2. Click on the "Coloring Pages" link.

   **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.)

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.)

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.)

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**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 used to encourage them to think about Crayola products and want to buy them.

**ASK** *How are Crayola products the real "star" of this website?* (Students should understand that all of the activities on the site feature Crayola products in one way or another.)

**ASK** *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 word **advertise**.

**EXPLAIN** to students that they may have seen products advertised on commercials on TV or in magazines. Point out that you will 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

**INTRODUCE** students to the following site. Many students will be familiar with Webkinz, but be sure they all understand that Webkinz are stuffed animals. When people buy a stuffed animal and regsiter 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."

**Webkinz:** www.webkinz.com

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

**1.** Click on the "New Members" link, which then asks viewers to enter a Pet Code.
**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.)

**2.** Return to the home page and click on the link at the bottom called "Webkinz Catalog."
**ASK** *What is this page trying to get you to do?* (Students should understand that this page is clearly designed to sell Webkinz products.)

**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 an animal so that they can get a code and enter the world.)

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? How does this get you to buy Webkinz products?* (Students should understand that all of the things to watch and do feature cute Webkinz animals, and are designed to make viewers want the animals.)

**REVISIT** with students all the different tricks the website uses 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 of the activities on the site feature Webkinz products.)

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

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


## Teach 3: My Product Website

**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 webpages 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.


## Wrap Up and Assess

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

*What is the main purpose of a product website?*

*How do different things on the site encourage you to pay attention to and want to buy the product?*

*How is the product the "star" of the website?*

*How did you advertise your product on the website you designed?*

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## Extension Activity

Choose a print advertisement aimed at children from a newspaper or magazine. Show it to the class and invite students to discuss how it encourages people to buy something.

Then have students work in groups to examine a children's magazine that includes advertising. Have them identify all the things in the magazine that advertise something, reminding them that this includes anything that calls attention to or tries to get people to buy a product. Have each group choose one ad from its magazine and present it to the class, describing how it tries to make people buy a product.

## Homework

Explain to students that websites are used to advertise all kinds of things, including movies. The purpose of a movie website is to make the movie seem fun or interesting, and encourage people to buy tickets and see the movie.

Choose a recent age-appropriate movie, and provide students with the URL for the movie's main website. Have students work with a family member to explore the website. Ask them to find all the ways the website tries to get people to want to see the movie. This might include trailers and movies clips, interviews with the actors, and games or other activities. Also ask them to identify links to products connected to the movie, such as clothing or toys, and describe how the site encourages them to buy the products.

**Alignment with Standards – National Educational Technology Standards for Students© 2007**

(Source: International Society for Technology in Education, 2007)

**1. Creativity and Innovation**
    b. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes
    c. create original works as a means of personal or group expression

**3. Research and Information Fluency**
    a. plan strategies to guide inquiry
    b. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media
    c. evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks
    d. process data and report results

**4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making**
    c. collect and analyze data to identify solutions and/or make informed decisions

**5. Digital Citizenship**
    a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology

# My Product Website

grades 2-3

**Name**

**Class**

**Date**

## Directions

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

FUN-FUN-FUN!

FUN & GAMES

COMICS

BUY-BUY-BUY

PLAY+ WIN!