



Picture Perfect Activity Responses



7th Grade Students at
Pollard Middle School
2013-2014

What is Picture Perfect?

In daily life, young people are bombarded with more media images today than ever before. The Internet, television, and magazines are all a part of most teen's day-to-day life. Because they are saturated with these media images, it is easy for teens to start believing what is portrayed in these images and start feeling differently about themselves without even realizing it. Developmentally, it is normal for teens to want to fit in with their peers so it is not uncommon for them to want to be like the images that they see around them. However, these images often portray the physical ideal as an impossible goal and gender roles in a very stereotypical manner.

Picture Perfect is a 45-minute interactive workshop that has 7th graders investigate the issue of how the media portrays gender roles and appearance, and explore how this can negatively impact how they can feel about themselves. The goals of the workshop are to:

- help students learn to identify gender role stereotypes
- see how these stereotypes are portrayed in the media by looking at magazine cutouts
- investigate how media messages impact them
- identify ways to not allow media messages to negatively influence them.



The Magazine Activity

In this activity, small groups of students looked at various magazine advertisements featuring men and women.

After looking at each of the images, students were asked to fill out an activity sheet with the following questions:

- What messages about men and women do the pictures portray?
- What do these pictures tell you about the roles of men and women?
- What do you notice about their physical appearance?
- Are you comfortable looking at these pictures? Why or why not?
- How do these pictures impact how you feel about your gender and expected roles?

What messages about men do the pictures portray?

Men are strong and tough.

Men are muscular and have a 6-pack.

Men play sports.

Men are manly.



What messages about women do the pictures portray?

Women don't wear a lot of clothing.

Women should be sexual.

Women have to be thin.

Women are feminine.



What do the pictures tell you about the roles of men and women?

Men

Men are supposed to be stronger than women.

Men *do* things.

Men have to control women.

Men are able to do or see whatever they want.

Women

Women should look pretty for men.

Women are accessories to men.

Women are judged on what they wear.

Women must act innocent.



What do you notice about the models' physical appearance?

Men don't wear a shirt.

Men and women are sexualized.

Men and women have flawless skin and hair.

Women are thin and wear make up.

Did you know?
The female body type portrayed in advertising as the ideal is possessed naturally by only 5% of American females.¹

Are you comfortable looking at these pictures? Why or why not?

“We are more comfortable seeing pictures of women than we are men.”

“Yes — we see them all the time in magazines and on TV.”

“Somewhat...some of us have adjusted to seeing overly sexualized images.”

“No — it makes you feel like you have to be something you’re not.”

Did You Know?
69% of 5th-12th grade girls reported that magazine pictures influenced their idea of a perfect body shape.²

Photo Credit

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<http://www.backstagegfx.com/forum/uploads/U1-1254627039.png>

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http://wfiles.brothersoft.com/s/sexy_perfume_ad_41067-1600x1200.jpg

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<http://blogs.longwood.edu/advertising3/files/2012/10/Dolce-Gabbana-Fashion-Wallpapers-3-Wallpaper.jpg>

Sources

1. The Renfrew Center Foundation for Eating Disorders, “Eating Disorders 101 Guide: A Summary of Issues, Statistics and Resources,” 2003.
2. “Eating Disorder Statistics.” *National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders*. N.p., n.d. Web.